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Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

Provisional

7154th meeting
Sunday, 13 April 2014, 8 p.m.
New York

President:	Mrs. Ogwu	(Nigeria)
Members:	Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Llanos
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Araud
	Jordan	Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Luxembourg	Mr. Maes
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Oh Joon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Rwanda	Mr. Gasana
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power

Agenda

Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)

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The meeting was called to order at 8.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 13 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Mr. Fernandez-Taranco.

Mr. Fernandez-Taranco: Once again, since the last briefing to the Council, presented by the Secretary-General on 28 March, the situation regarding Ukraine has seriously deteriorated. This is now the tenth time that the Council has addressed the issue. The General Assembly also took up the matter on 27 March (see A/68/PV.80).

Following close to two weeks of relative calm, starting on 6 April armed individuals and separatist groups began to seize Government buildings and confiscate lethal weapons in Donetsk oblast of Ukraine, including in the cities of Donetsk, Lugansk and Kharkiv. The individuals involved called for secession from Ukraine and for joining the Russian Federation. In Donetsk, some of these individuals declared a People's Republic of Donetsk.

It has now been reported that there have been at least five new cities in eastern Ukraine targeted by uprisings and seizures of Government buildings in the past 24 hours, including the towns of Sloviansk, Kramatorsk and Druzhkivka. United Nations monitors have reported a consistent reinforcement of barricades and armed civilians on both sides. They also sighted armed militiamen with AK-47s, machine guns and sniper rifles. United Nations monitors have also reported duelling rallies in Kharkiv today, resulting in injuries to some 50 persons. On the eve of 13 April, authorities in Kyiv launched an "anti-terror" operation to reclaim Sloviansk, a day after it was overrun by pro-separatist activists, whom the United Nations human rights monitors on the ground have described as well-armed and well-organized militiamen.

As of 13 April, at least one Ukrainian officer has been killed in a gun battle; however, the exact number of casualties in the skirmishes remains unknown. Numerous others have been reported wounded. Also today, Ukraine's acting President, Oleksandr Turchynov, signed a presidential decree, giving the self-declared separatists until 6 a.m. Kyiv time to give up their weapons in order to avoid prosecution. The President further declared in a televised address to the nation that if illegal activities were not halted, a full-scale operation involving the Ukrainian army would be launched.

The Russian Federation has publicly stated on several occasions that it would be "forced to act" if Kyiv were to employ force against demonstrators in the East. The situation is therefore now more combustible than ever. The Secretary-General and the United Nations remain committed to the pursuit of a peaceful solution to this ever-deepening crisis. The Secretary-General has continued to speak out for the exercise of maximum restraint by all concerned and strict adherence to international law. He also continues to urge all others with influence on the situation to immediately and publicly call for restraint and a return to calm. The Secretary-General further appeals for direct and constructive dialogue between the parties, and between Kyiv and Moscow, to de-escalate the situation and address all differences.

It has become painfully evident that the Ukraine crisis will continue to deepen if intensive efforts are not urgently made by all concerned to de-escalate the situation. At this moment, Ukraine teeters on the very brink. However, it is not just Ukraine that will suffer from a scenario where the likelihood of further bloodshed and violent clashes grows by the hour. Russia, which shares a long border area with Ukraine as well as the broader European region, faces a spillover effect of potentially severe consequences. Such scenarios will also have repercussions for the entire international community.

The President: I thank Mr. Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation has called for this emergency meeting of the Security Council because of the serious dangerous evolution of the situation in south-eastern Ukraine. We have pointed out on several occasions, including in this Chamber, that the reckless actions that led to the coup d'état by the self-proclaimed Kyiv authorities threaten to definitively destroy the fragile mosaic of Ukrainian society. The authorities do not wish to listen to those who do not accept the imposed dominance of Kyiv by national radicals and chauvinistic, Russophobic and anti-Semitic forces, whom they perceive as a threat to their human dignity and to their very lives.

Grotesque Russophobia and entrenched hatred have become the norm in the Verkhovna Rada as well. A few days ago, a member of Parliament belonging to the chauvinist Svoboda party said this about the Russian-speaking inhabitants of Ukraine:

> "I would have acted much more harshly. I would simply have shot them. The enemy is prevailing in our land. They should have been chased out in 1654. These creatures deserve only one thing — death."

It should be noted that this was said by a woman. We can only imagine the thoughts that must be churning in the minds of her brutal fellow partisans. And that is not even the most radical group on the Ukrainian political spectrum. Should we be surprised that the peaceful political protects and the call by the people of south-eastern Ukraine for their aspirations to be heard have been met by the Rada with draconic laws entailing long-term prison sentences for separatism?

The events of the past two days have shown that, following our many calls for the organization of inclusive national political dialogue, a measure of common sense has prevailed in Kyiv. Prime Minister Yatsenyuk went to Donetsk; although he did not meet with the protesters, he did say the right things about dialogue, decentralization and his desire to find a way out of the problem.

What is the situation today? We have been told that restraint will be exercised and a peaceful solution found to the situation that takes into account the opinions of the various groupings of the Ukrainian population. That has been confirmed by our Western interlocutors. However, on 13 April the Verkhovna Rada-appointed President Turchynov stated that the Ukrainian Security Council had decided to launch a full-scale anti-terrorist operation, including the use of the armed forces. However, unlike the Maidan demonstrators, the protesters have terrorized no one, have used no bulldozers against the authorioties, and thrown no Molotov cocktails. It is no coincidence that law-enforcement officers were present among the Maidan protestors.

Now the Kyiv authorities must use force to suppress other areas of the country. According to Turchynov, the people of south-eastern Ukraine must end their protests by the morning of Monday, 14 April, lest armed force be used. However, the protesters' interests and opinions have not been taken into account or even discussed. As a result, blood has already been shed in the South-East and the situation is extremely dangerous. Any further escalation of the situation must be swiftly stopped.

The international community must require the Maidan henchmen who seized power in Kyiv to cease their war against their own people and to implement all the commitments under the 21 February agreement. The Western sponsors of the Maidan henchmen, in particular those who stood as witnesses to the agreement and the United States, which is their backer, are obligated to end their support, dissociate themselves from neo-Nazis and other extremists, stop the use of force against the Ukrainian people, and begin forthwith a genuine national dialogue with the full participation of all regions, in the interests of the speedy implementation of radical constitutional reform.

It is the West that must determine the opportunity for avoiding civil war in Ukraine. Some people, including in this Chamber, do not wish to recognize the real reasons for the events in Ukraine and are forever seeing the hand of Moscow in the South-East. Enough is enough. They must stop claiming that we have deployed our army along the border with that country and are practically already at the English Channel, and that we have sent agents to coordinate the protests in Ukraine. It must be understood that south-eastern Ukraine and its people are deeply worried about their future and that they do not want anyone, especially the nationalist radicals, to impose their [illegible] on them.

Ms. Murmokaitė (Lithuania): I wish to thank you, Madam President, for convening this meeting. I also wish to thank Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing.

Lithuania is deeply concerned about the sharp deterioration of the situation in eastern Ukraine.

External forces and local provocateurs continue to fuel separatism and hatred, destabilizing the situation in eastern Ukraine on the eve of the 25 May elections. The scenario is dangerously familiar. Where there was no unrest, unrest and chaos are being created by pro-Russian militias, again anonymous and without insignia, and again carrying modern models of assault weapons as seen in Crimea. Again, considerable Russian troops are massed on Ukraine's borders. Again, the external anti-Ukranian and anti-Western propaganda machine is in full swing, inciting suspicion, mistrust and hatred waiting to explode. Ukraine's traitor Yanukovich, who abandoned his country and fled, opening the floodgates to Crimea's annexation, is being pushed again into the daylight to clear the way for Ukraine's further dismemberment.

Groups of provocateurs in the hundreds, supported by pro-Russian militias, are attacking buildings of Ukraine's State institutions and declaring independence from Ukraine, as well as announcing plans for new referendums on joining Russia, in spite of the fact that recent opinion polls clearly show that the predominant majority of people in the region see their future inextricably linked to Ukraine. In fact, about 65 per cent of the region's residents, according to opinion polls, have expressed their desire to remain part of Ukraine, while only 18.2 per cent want to join Russia.

Tragically, bloodshed is happening where there was no bloodshed before pro-Russian militants started their creeping secessionist provocations. It is as clear as day that, in spite of the reassurances we heard from Moscow a few weeks ago, military aggression against Ukraine and its sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity has not stopped with Crimea. My Government strongly condemns the actions of the separatist groups and their sponsors in the Donetsk region, as well as in the regions of Luhansk and Kharkiv.

Lithuania supports the efforts of the Government of Ukraine to resolve this complex and unpredictable situation in a peaceful way. Ukraine's Government has reached out repeatedly to the separatists. In the most difficult of political and economic circumstances, Ukraine's acting President Turchinov has decided to prepare a law on decentralization, granting more powers to the regions. Acting Prime Minister Yatseniuk has clearly stated that the Government must respond to people's desire to have more regional authority. That decision is an important step forward, showing the flexibility and readiness of legitimate Ukrainian authorities to heed its population and engage constructively.

Prime Minister Yatseniuk also reassured the Russian-speaking population regarding the use of the Russian language. Furthermore, amnesty was offered to all militants who laid down arms and returned to seeking a peaceful solution to existing issues.

It is obvious that the Ukrainian Government is doing everything possible, under such dramatic circumstances, to respond to the legitimate needs and concerns of the population, to curb corruption and impunity, which had reigned under Yanukovich, to re-establish law and order and the authority of the State and to address the problems the Government inherited from years of neglect and mismanagement. We fully support those efforts and once again stress the extraordinary restraint and patience with which Ukraine's Government has continued to respond to the unending provocations and efforts to dismember the State by armed pro-Russian militants and separatists.

At the same time, when the existence of a State is put in danger, we understand and support the right of Ukraine to defend itself in the face of external aggression and to tackle militant separatism and continuous provocations in order to protect the State and its population from a further escalation of violence.

The international community and members of the Council should not be fooled by the pronouncements of the likes of Yanukovich and his corrupt cronies. The independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine are being threatened, and that threat is a threat to the security and stability of the whole region and Europe, with serious international repercussions.

We urge the Russian Federation to call back its troops from the Ukrainian border, to stop supporting separatist groups and to cease all other actions aimed at destabilizing Ukraine. The meeting among the United States, Russia, Ukraine and the European Union foreseen for 17 April in Geneva wold offer a viable chance for dialogue and diplomacy. We call on Russia not to waste that opportunity.

Ms. Power (United States of America): The human stakes of what is happening in Ukraine are extremely high. The lives of innocent civilians are at risk, yet we are being bombarded by Russian disinformation and propaganda, while the Ukrainians are being confronted by incitement and violence. Russian media

and Government spokespersons are spreading fiction, so we must tonight focus on facts.

The Council has heard, these last weeks, Russia disclaim any intention of occupying or invading. The Council has heard it publicly, and we have heard it privately. Unfortunately, the fact is that the armed seizure of buildings in six eastern Ukrainian towns yesterday, and several more today, mirrors the tactics Russian forces used in the early stages of the Crimea invasion. Then, too, officials from the Russian Federation spoke early on in the crisis and disclaimed any intention of occupying or invading. In the earlier Crimean case, highly organized, well-equipped and professional forces wearing Russian military uniforms and military gear without identifying insignia moved in first to take control of Crimean Government and security facilities, before being later replaced by regular Russian military forces. Then, too, Russia said it was acting to protect minorities' rights. But the whole world now knows that they were not. As the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has reported, the minorities at risk in Crimea are Tatars and Ukrainians.

The Council has heard that there are no Russian troops in eastern Ukraine, but the fact is that many of the armed units that we have seen were outfitted in bullet-proof vests and camouflage uniforms with insignia removed. Those armed units, some wearing black and orange Saint George's ribbons — associated with Russian Victory Day celebrations — raised Russian and separatist flags over seized buildings and have called for referendums and union with Russia. We know who is behind that; indeed, the only entity in the area capable of those coordinated, professional military actions is Russia.

The synchronized surgical seizure of buildings yesterday occurred in towns along the main highway, followed by armed roadblocks, almost as if a coordinated barrier were being formed between Kyiv and the major eastern cities of Donetsk and Luhansk. The Council does not have to take my word for it — or even that of the Ukrainian Government — it need only witness for itself the videos of professional military shepherding thugs into a building in Kramatorsk; the photographs showing the so-called concerned citizens taking over Sloviansk, equipped exactly like the elite troops that took Crimea; or the video of a military operation in Krasny Liman by armed men with the same equipment.

The Council has heard laments about instability, as if instability were organic. But the fact is that this is the saddest kind of instability: it is completely man-made. This instability was written and choreographed in and by Russia.

We continue efforts to de-escalate the situation in Ukraine and find a diplomatic path forward, which is why Secretary Kerry will participate in the Geneva talks on 17 April, which will include Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov. But if those are to be successful, Russia will have to explain why its forces continue to mass on the Ukrainian border — at least 40,000 forces — and it will have to come with constructive ideas on how to de-escalate and resolve the armed attacks on buildings in eastern Ukraine.

The United States stands with Ukraine and the fundamental principle that the future of Ukraine must be decided by the Ukrainian people. We also stand with international law and norms and the fundamental principle that borders are not suggestions. On Monday, we will conclude the $1 billion loan guarantee for Ukraine. That will benefit all the Ukrainian people, including minorities. Next week, Vice-President Biden will visit Ukraine. We strongly support concluding the agreement between Ukraine and the International Monetary Fund so that the international community can bolster Ukraine's economy. And we will support in every way we can Ukraine's elections at the end of May so that Ukraine can advance its political transition and look to a peaceful future.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom is gravely concerned by events in eastern Ukraine, which have escalated over the past 48 hours, with armed men seizing control of Government buildings and erecting checkpoints and barricades in six different cities. Street protests have given way to violent action. That is a dangerous escalation of an already dangerous situation.

We have all seen the video footage of events over the weekend: professional, well-armed and well-equipped units wearing identical uniforms conducting coordinated military operations against Ukrainian State institutions. That is a pattern that is all too familiar. Coming just weeks after Russian troops illegally deployed to Crimea while wearing uniforms without insignia, these events point clearly to Russia once again interfering directly in the internal affairs of Ukraine while using manufactured pretexts and military force. Such actions are contrary to international law, have already been condemned by the international

community and have been declared invalid by the General Assembly.

As a Member of the United Nations, and as a permanent member of the Security Council, Russia is obliged to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of any State. Yet satellite images show that there are between 35,000 and 40,000 Russian troops in the vicinity of the border with Ukraine, equipped with combat aircraft, tanks, artillery and logistical support units. That is in addition to the 25,000 Russian troops based illegally in Crimea.

Just as six weeks ago Russia denied deploying its troops to Crimea, it also now denies that it has amassed troops on Ukraine's eastern border. It claims that the publicly available satellite images illustrating that troop deployment were taken in August 2013. That is false; additional images released on 11 April show clearly that the build-up started in early March of this year.

Russia's aggressive stance is a clear threat to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. The United Kingdom calls on Russia immediately to redeploy its troops away from the border, cease all activity designed to heighten tensions and sow discord, and revoke the mandate given by the Federation Council on 1 March to use military force on Ukrainian soil.

The Russian Federation has made little secret of its efforts to undermine the process of reconciliation in Ukraine. Rather than assisting its neighbours in rebuilding their country after the fall of a deeply corrupt regime that left the nation on the verge of bankruptcy, Russia has instead sought to destabilize the country further in pursuit of its narrow interests. Russia must desist from those steps and address whatever grievances it has through dialogue, starting with the contact group talks scheduled for this coming week.

The international community is not fooled by the Kremlin's use of propaganda and misinformation to spread fears among the population of eastern Ukraine. Contrary to Russian claims, the recent demonstrations in eastern cities are not organic. They do not enjoy widespread support, and the numbers of genuine protestors on the streets pale in comparison to the crowds of hundreds of thousands who protested against the former regime. Rather, what we are witnessing is a well-orchestrated campaign designed to destabilize the country. If Russia really has genuine concerns about Ukraine's Russian-speaking population, then its actions have done nothing to safeguard their interests. The illegal annexation of Crimea, stoking tensions and provoking violence in eastern Ukraine, hurt and endanger all the people of Ukraine.

The special monitoring mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations human rights monitoring mission are in Ukraine to observe the situation and report on developments. Their presence is designed to safeguard the rights of all the citizens of Ukraine. We look forward to their assessment of the situation and we fully support their work.

Russia is seeking to impose its will on the people of Ukraine by using misinformation, intimidation and aggression — tactics drawn from the darkest days of the past century. That is completely unacceptable. The Ukrainian people have the right to determine their own future free from Russian interference.

On 25 May Ukraine will elect a new president. The Ukrainian Government has stated clearly that its programme of constitutional reform will include discussions on the degree of autonomy devolved to Ukraine's regions. That is a clear pathway to resolve differences through peaceful, constitutional means. The use of armed force that we are now witnessing in eastern Ukraine to impose one set of views on the peaceful majority is therefore entirely without justification. Moscow must reject these latest unlawful actions, and do so publicly.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): Since yesterday, we have seen the abrupt and simultaneous outbreak of violence in eastern Ukraine: nothing about it was spontaneous. France condemns the violence. We call on all parties to exercise restraint and dialogue so that a peaceful solution to the crisis quickly emerges. Everyone must work towards de-escalation.

The scenario we are seeing reminds one of the events that took place in Crimea one month ago: simultaneous action by a small but trained group of aggressive activists determined to occupy territory, followed by the presence of disciplined, masked men wearing uniforms and armed with weapons of war that are not found in military surplus. Those facts, which come to us through the waves of images on the Internet, are the same as the ones that Russia labelled a month ago as spontaneous demonstrations by local self-defence groups. No one believed it then, and we

do not believe it today. One gets the impression that, in denying the facts, Russia is unaware of the existence of the Internet and that it serves to contradict its denials. Let us not forget that such protests were a prelude to the annexation of Crimea.

Moreover, the build-up of Russian troops for several weeks now — under the guise of military exercises — casts an ominous shadow over eastern Ukraine. Further still, the economic pressure is becoming more biting. Without dialogue with the Ukrainian side, which it has taken by the throat, Russia has brutally raised the price of gas. It blocks the entry of goods at the border between Russia and Ukraine, no doubt in an effort to stifle a country it calls its brother. Finally, Russia is systematically bombarding Ukraine with a message of defiance vis-à-vis Kyiv via the airwaves and television channels, which, for many people who do not have access to various sources of information, is the only message they hear.

It is against that backdrop that France commends the level-headedness of Ukrainian officials who, against that destabilizing torrent of events, seek to resolve the crisis through dialogue. That is the spirit in which Prime Minister Yatsenyuk visited eastern Ukraine with specific proposals in response to the real questions of people overwhelmed by propaganda who are disoriented and being exploited by radical groups. France has always been clear on the issue of the status of languages and regions. We encourage the authorities in Kyiv to continue their efforts for cooler heads to prevail, enter into a constructive dialogue and reassure people about their place in Ukraine.

The future of Ukraine should not, and cannot, be up to anyone else but the Ukrainians themselves. We should support the Ukrainian authorities in organizing elections, under the best of conditions, that ensure that everyone is represented. Our message has always been clear that the presidential election scheduled for 25 May must be free and transparent and guaranteed by the presence of international observers.

We reiterate our commitment to the territorial integrity of Ukraine. We call on Russia commit to de-escalation and to condemn, along with the rest of the Council, the attempts at destabilization carried out by armed groups in eastern Ukraine. We also call on Russia to fully assume its role as a permanent member of the Security Council. Russia is a guarantor of peace and security in the world, both in the larger world and in its immediate neighbourhood. There cannot be two different standards. Russia must today put its full weight behind helping Ukraine regain stability. It must show itself up to the task of playing the role it wishes to play as a pillar of Euro-Asian stability. We hope that the proposed meeting on 17 April among Russia, Ukraine, the United States and the European Union will be held and that it makes it possible for solutions to emerge. This is a crucial stage and we call on all parties to exercise calm and restraint.

In conclusion, I would like to raise a final warning call. The danger that now faces us is the failure of all our concerted efforts to build an international order that is not based on force, for today it is force alone that is seeking to impose the law.

Mr. Gasana (Rwanda): I thank you, Madam President, for convening this emergency meeting on the situation in Ukraine. I also thank Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing on the worrying situation in eastern Ukraine.

We are very alarmed by reports of increased tensions in eastern Ukraine in the past several days. We condemn the attack that killed a State security officer and wounded five others in the eastern city of Slovyansk. The perpetrators of that criminal act should be brought to justice. I take this opportunity to echo the Secretary-General's call to all sides to work towards calming the situation.

After numerous calls for the de-escalation of the crisis, the situation has become more complex for the diverse Ukrainian community. It is imperative to protect the rights of the citizens of Ukraine regardless of ethnic background. We reiterate our call for an inclusive dialogue, a frank and open discussion that is mutually beneficial for all the parties concerned.

Although Rwanda agrees in principle that Ukraine, like any other country, has a right to self-defence and to promote its territorial integrity, its acts should be proportional. We discourage any military act that would put the lives of innocent civilians in danger.

Rwanda remains of the view that military action will only worsen the already tense situation. We encourage all the parties involved, particularly in the current situation, to exercise full restraint. It is vital to allow the diplomatic efforts that have already been deployed to work. The international community cannot watch another crisis slip out of its hands. We must act on what we stand for — peace and security. We welcome the discussion among the United States, Ukraine and

Russia due to take place on 17 April. We encourage United Nations participation in those talks.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the Security Council, the only world body in charge of maintaining international peace and security, must work towards restoring its own unity in order to be able to defend the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of a States Members of the United Nations, while addressing the interests of the countries of the region. We recognize that there are political interests involved. However, we should not forget that ordinary Ukrainians are caught in the midst of this conflict; all they want and ask for is a peaceful country. This we should all be mindful of.

Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Jordan is deeply concerned about the recent developments in eastern Ukraine and the accompanying escalation, which could increase the threats to the stability of that region. What is happening there is a mutiny against the State and the Constitution of Ukraine. If it continues it will lead inevitably to the dismemberment and dismantling of the Ukrainian State. Ukraine therefore has a right and a duty to its citizens to preserve its unity and territorial integrity, and, even more important, to restore every part of its territory.

We call on the Ukrainian authorities to attempt to use every possible means to resolve the crisis and keep open the channels for dialogue with the rebels and all the relevant parties in order to put an end to this mutiny. We also appeal to them to respect the principles of human rights in dealing with the crisis. We call on the influential parties to exert every effort to convince the rebels to bring a peaceful end to the crisis, to end their armed demonstrations and acts of intimidation, and to withdraw from Ukrainian public and Government buildings.

The Security Council should also send a clear message of support for Ukraine and its authorities in their efforts to end this movement of armed insurrection, to promote the rule of law and to preserve the country's unity and territorial integrity. There should be no interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine, no act of intimidation and no threat of use of force against it, which would contravene the principles and positions of the Charter of the United Nations. In that regard, we reaffirm that it is in the interests of the international community as a whole to maintain the integrity of the provisions of international law and to refrain from creating excuses and justifications for military intervention against States, in contravention of the Charter. International law is the cornerstone of equality among States and is designed to protect them from armed threats to their sovereignty regardless of their size, importance or military might.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): Like all of us, Australia has watched the events in eastern Ukraine with mounting concern. What we have seen unfold is a coordinated operation where well-trained and well-armed paramilitary units have moved quickly to lay siege to, occupy and control key institutions in five or six towns in Donetsk province. The violence in Sloviansk has led to one death and nine wounded. The stakes are obviously dangerously high. This has not been a spontaneous, grassroots, broad-based protest movement by local inhabitants; rather it is a pattern of highly orchestrated destabilization by pro-Russian groups. Those groups have included units of highly trained armed men with Russian military equipment, operating without identifying insignia. Those units have used force to storm and besiege local Government buildings and institutions.

If all that sounds familiar, it is because we have seen the playbook used by Russia in Crimea. In that case, it became clear that the militias were in fact Russian forces. We condemn any use of proxy forces. A State cannot seek to avoid responsibility for its actions by attempting to cloak the identity of those working on its behalf. The principles of State responsibility make it very clear that a State bears international responsibility for acts undertaken by informal actors whom it engages on its behalf.

We have heard Russia's statement about the crisis taking place in eastern Ukraine, but what we are actually witnessing is violence and destabilization in an effort to manufacture a sense of crisis and separatism. Ukraine's response to those provocations has been one of restraint under intolerable threats to its stability and independence. There is no evidence of actions directed at Russian speakers in eastern Ukraine that could possibly justify an intervention by Russia. Nor is there the generalized anarchy claimed. The ongoing work of the special mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe is all the more important for providing an objective account of the situation in eastern Ukraine, and we welcome the information that the number of monitors will be significantly increased in coming days.

International condemnation of Russia's actions against Ukraine in the past six weeks has been resounding. General Assembly resolution 68/262 unambiguously condemned the threat and use of force in this manner as contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and to Russia's specific treaty obligations to Ukraine. Many countries, including my own, have imposed unilateral sanctions to register the depth of their concern. Repeated calls for de-escalation have been ignored.

Russia's major military build-up along Ukraine's eastern border has been a significant and deliberation provocation that only further escalates tensions and the likelihood of conflict. It deepens Russia's own isolation and also, of course, strengthens the resolve of the international community to stand with and support Ukraine as it seeks to maintain its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The only way forward, as we all know, is de-escalation, dialogue and the free elections that are planned for 25 May. And Ukraine must be allowed to prepare for those elections without the interference and coercion we are witnessing.

But talks can take place only with genuine commitment and good faith on all sides. The talks between Russia, Ukraine, the European Union and the United States planned for 17 April are an essential step in that direction, but can take place successfully only on that basis. Attempts to change the facts on the ground are completely contrary to dialogue and peaceful resolution. We call on Russia to work immediately to reduce tensions, stop its destabilization and withdraw its forces from the provocative posture they have assumed on Ukraine's border. We have heard assurances in the past that Russia will take such action. It now really is imperative that it do so.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing.

China is deeply worried about the recent escalation of the situation in Ukraine. We hope that the relevant parties will remain calm, exercise restraint and avoid any further deterioration of the situation.

Settling the question of Ukraine involves the interests and concerns of all parties. It should be considered in a balanced manner. Political and diplomatic channels should continue to be pursued in order to narrow differences and settle the issue within the framework of law and order. China has consistently called on the international community to make constructive efforts and employ good offices to ease the situation in Ukraine, and will continue to support the international community in those endeavours.

Mrs. Perceval (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I, too, would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Oscar Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing on the developments in Ukraine and on the involvement of the United Nations. I also welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Ukraine at this meeting.

Argentina continues to follow the situation with concern, in particular in the east of Ukraine. Undoubtedly, the situation has deteriorated, with further tensions and violence, and we cannot remain indifferent to that. We are deeply concerned that the tension and violence may continue and indeed worsen. We are also concerned about the consequences for Ukraine and the region.

The delegation of Argentina reiterates that it is essential that we adhere to the principles that we subscribe to as Members of the United Nations. In particular, we must remember our commitment to non-interference in the internal affairs of States, whether militarily, politically or economically. In that respect, we believe that the action of any State or international organization must duly respect Ukraine's handling of its own affairs. As we have expressed on several occasions, the situation will not be resolved through any kind of unilateral action. It is crucial that the use of force be avoided. We join the Secretary-General today in calling on all parties to endeavour to bring calm to the situation. Maximal self-restraint must be shown, and constructive dialogue sought and established on an urgent basis in order to de-escalate the situation and address the parties' differences.

In conclusion, Argentina will continue to promote dialogue and a peaceful settlement of the crisis. It is essential to step up efforts to create the conditions necessary for urgent dialogue to begin so that solutions can be found to the parties' differences and the interests of all minorities are taken into account. The multilateral meeting among the United States, the Russian Federation and the European Union that is planned for Thursday, 17 April will present an opportunity to do so. We hope that those main actors will be able to achieve the agreement necessary. We reiterate that the international community should concentrate its efforts on establishing dialogue. We stress that Ukrainians

must have a democratic and peaceful outcome to the situation.

Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing.

The Republic of Korea is closely watching the recent developments in the eastern part of Ukraine. We are deeply concerned over the escalation of tensions in various cities of eastern Ukraine, including the worrying seizure of key public buildings in Donetsk and Slovyansk by force. Those actions will only further exacerbate the already tense situation, and we condemn any use of force to change the situation on the ground.

As Ukraine moves towards critical elections in May, we believe that political differences must be addressed in a non-violent way through a legitimate process. United Nations States Members should respect that process, and there should not be any influence exerted by outside forces. We reiterate our strong support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine.

Mr. Cherif (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing.

Chad is deeply concerned by the violent acts committed by armed men and separatist groups in various cities in the east of Ukraine. The actions of those insurgents, who are reportedly well-equipped and well-organized, are aimed at taking possession of public buildings in several cities, further destabilizing Ukraine and compromising the search for a lasting political solution.

Chad condemns every instance of violence that occurred yesterday and today. As we have stated many times in previous meetings of the Security Council on the same matter, the solution to the Ukrainian crisis can only be political, not military. Therefore, the attacks by armed and clearly well-organized men in unmarked uniforms are only making an already explosive situation worse.

Given the dangerous turn that the situation is taking, we call upon all the parties concerned to show restraint and calm. We call on them to give priority to a peaceful solution that respects the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Ukraine. In that vein, a political settlement of the crisis necessarily requires that the interests and concerns of all parts of Ukrainian society, in all its diversity, be taken into account. Neither the attempts of the armed insurgents calling for parts of Ukraine to be integrated into Russia nor the recourse to force against those insurgents — much less a possible intervention by foreign forces — will help to solve the Ukrainian crisis.

The age-old historical, geographic and cultural links between Ukraine and the Russian Federation should in principle serve as a basis for new and healthier relations of good neighbourliness, mutual respect and cooperation between them. In that context, we encourage the Secretary-General and the entire international community to pursue their mediation efforts in order to align the positions of the parties involved and find a peaceful solution that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Mr. Maes (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I too would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Oscar Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing on the developments in the situation in Ukraine. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of Ukraine, His Excellency Mr. Yuriy Sergeyev, to the Council.

Luxembourg is deeply concerned about the recent events in eastern and south-eastern Ukraine. Yesterday in Sloviansk, in the Donetsk region, masked and armed men took control of a police station, and then the headquarters of the town's security services, and put up barricades, blocking access to the town. There are also reports coming from the town of Kramatorsk that armed individuals have taken over a police station and there has been an exchange of fire with the police. Over the weekend, other towns in the Donetsk region saw similiar incidents, which appear to be coordinated and well orchestrated, recalling the events that took place in Crimea.

In that regard, we see a continuation of the actions undertaken by Russia on the territory of Ukraine in recent weeks. Those actions are a flagrant violation of international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act, and run counter to the commitments that Russia has made to Ukraine under the Budapest Memorandum of 1994 and the Treaty between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership, signed in 1997.

In that context, we welcome the self-control and restraint shown to date by the Ukrainian authorities in the face of repeated violations of the sovereignty

and territorial integrity of their country in the past six weeks. However, we all know that the Ukrainian Government cannot stand there without doing anything in the face of this new threat to its territorial integrity. Like every State Member of the United Nations, Ukraine has the right to defend itself by virtue of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

This evening, Russia reiterated its version of events, according to which the demands of the eastern and south-eastern regions of Ukraine are being ignored by Kyiv. However, that does reflect the facts. We commend Ukraine's consistent affirmation that it is ready for an inclusive political dialogue that takes into account the interests of all Ukrainians and all regions of Ukraine. The Prime Minister of Ukraine, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, recently reaffirmed that during his visit to Donetsk on 11 April. However, political dialogue on the country's future and revising the Constitution cannot take place under the threat of a foreign invasion. That threat must not jeopardize the opportunity for Ukrainians to express their sovereign will, in the presence of international observers, in the free and fair presidential election on 25 May.

We must urgently strive to de-escalate the crisis. We therefore join colleagues in calling for calm and restraint and in renewing the appeal to Russia to withdraw its forces massed near the Ukrainian border. Russia must stop its actions to destabilize eastern Ukraine and distance itself from the separatist militia activity. Continuing the military escalation would have untold consequences.

For its part, Luxembourg would like to believe that it is still possible to settle the Ukrainian crisis peacefully. Multilateral bodies, the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe all have a role to play, in particular through the observers whom they have deployed on the ground. However, a peaceful solution first and foremost requires direct dialogue between Russia and Ukraine. In that regard, we hope that the four-party talks, bringing together the diplomatic leaders of Ukraine, Russia, the United States and the European Union in Geneva on 17 April, will make is possible to begin a dialogue and to find a way out of the gravest crisis that Europe has seen since the end of the Cold War. The tension and violence of recent days must not be used as a pretext to reject all dialogue.

The time is critical. There is not a minute to lose in ensuring that dialogue prevails over violence, reason over emotions and peace over war.

Mr. Llanos (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing and welcome the convening of this meeting at this critical time for Ukraine and the region. We face a sensitive development in the crisis in Ukraine. Chile regrets the outbreaks of violence seen in the eastern regions, specifically in Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv, and expresses its deep concern over the serious consequences of the escalation of the crisis owing to the actions of separatist groups.

It is critical that the parties exercise the maximum restraint in order to contain the crisis. Our country once again reiterates the need to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We also reaffirm the obligation incumbent on Members of the United Nations to refrain from resorting to the threat of or use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of any State. It is urgent that all parties involved refrain from undertaking actions that are contrary to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the international agreements and treaties to which Ukraine is a party.

We once again call on the parties to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis through direct political dialogue, to refrain from taking unilateral measures and to support international mediation initiatives, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/262. That process must be inclusive and must ensure the rule of law, human rights, fundamental freedoms and full respect for the rights of minorities. In that context, the role of the Security Council, the Secretary-General, his Special Envoy and regional organizations continues to be fundamental.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Nigeria.

I want to join my colleagues in thanking Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing on the latest developments in Ukraine. We have observed very closely the unfolding events in Ukraine since our last meeting on 28 March, when the Council was briefed by the Secretary-General. Like others, we are very deeply concerned about the fact that the situation remains tense and, indeed, has deteriorated. The utter lawlessness and state of anarchy witnessed

in at least six states in eastern Ukraine are provocative and constitute a grave threat to peace.

Throughout our engagement on this issue, our message has been unequivocal. The need to uphold universally agreed principles and the sanctity of international law is what we have stressed. That begins with respect for the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, among which is respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States. We have also highlighted the need to use the existing bilateral and multilateral instruments to resolve the crisis. The Budapest Memorandum of 1994 and the Treaty between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership, signed by both countries in 1990 and 1997, are significant points of departure for negotiations. Those are the principles that guide Nigeria's position and that inform our stance on the issue. We believe that only a diplomatic solution, achievable by direct and genuine dialogue between the parties, can resolve the current crisis between the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

Over time, the world has graduated from nineteenth-century adventures. In this splendid twenty-first century, the world should not encourage or tolerate the establishment of power blocs or spheres of influence, which are not only inimical to international peace and security but especially detrimental to the conduct of friendly and balanced relations between and among States. We emphasize the futility and dangers of a military solution to the crisis. Instead, the option of dialogue between the concerned parties must be vigorously pursued without preconditions. We call on all parties to exercise maximum restraint in order to avoid any further deterioration of the situation.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): I thank you, Madam President, for this opportunity to speak before the Security Council. I thank Council members for understanding the critical situation in Ukraine and for their support.

Before getting into the substance of my statement this evening, I would like start by mentioning that today Christians worldwide celebrate a great holiday, the day of the entry of our Lord into Jerusalem, Palm Sunday. Unfortunately, today the celebration is falling under the shadow of aggression and bloodshed in Ukraine. On the eve of the holiday, terrorists coordinated by agents of the Russian Federation seized control of State buildings in several cities of the Donetsk region.

Let me quote a statement made today by Ukraine's acting President Oleksandr Turchynov:

> "A particularly dangerous situation has arisen in the city of Slavyansk, where professionally trained armed troops wearing Russian armed forces camouflage without insignia shattered the peace. This morning, a convoy of law enforcement officers who sought to protect the citizens of Slavyansk were attacked with assault rifles. The criminals opened intense fire using local people as human shields. The blood of Ukrainians has been shed for one undivided sovereign Ukraine. That blood has been shed in a war that Russia is waging against Ukraine. The aggressor has not stopped, and continues to organize unrest in the eastern regions of our country. It is not a war between Ukrainians. The situation of confrontation was artificially created with the aim of weakening and destroying Ukraine itself."

Within a short period of time, approximately one and half months, the Ukrainian Government has done everything possible to avoid confrontation through an inclusive approach to each and every region. Recently, Mr. Yatsenyuk, the Prime Minister of Ukraine, visited the southern and eastern regions — Donetsk, Lugansk, Kharkiv, Dnepropetrovsk, Odessa — addressing such issues of concern as the language policy and prospects for decentralization of power and constitutional reforms. The Government is ready to consider the significant empowerment of local authorities in Ukraine. Unfortunately, the efforts of the Government of Ukraine have been severely challenged by recent developments in the eastern regions.

According to Ukrainian intelligence data, during the past month and a half in the eastern regions of Ukraine, agents of the Russian special services embarked on large-scale operations to seize power and destabilize the situation, threatening the lives of citizens of Ukraine, for the purpose of separating those regions from our country. During the past month, our Mission has regularly informed the Security Council and all States Members of the United Nations on the latest developments in Russian actions in Crimea and other regions of Ukraine. Russia has not only been constantly increasing the number of its troops deployed

along the Ukrainian border but it has also been sending subversive groups into Ukrainian regions in order to destabilize the situation. Such specially designated groups, made up of 10 to 20 members of the special forces, primarily from the main intelligence directorate or general staff of the armed forces of the Russian Federation, infiltrated Ukrainian territory with the task of forming and organizing military combat units. Ukraine has strong evidence of the involvement of the Russian special service forces, as was mentioned in a statement the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine made public early today.

The detention of Russian citizen members of subversive groups coordinated by the Russian federal security services and military intelligence is carried out on a daily basis by the security services of Ukraine, yielding the following facts, which are just a few out of dozens.

On 8 April, Russian citizen Maria Koleda, who fulfilled intelligence service tasks to destabilize in eastern Ukraine, was detained in Herson.

The Russian saboteur who was about to seize such strategic facilities as the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant was detained in the region of Herson.

On 10 March, a representative of the Russian Federation military intelligence service was detained in Donetsk.

On 12 March, the intelligence group of the Russian armed forces that infiltrated the Herson territory from Crimea was detained at the control point.

On 20 March, a Russian citizen named Markhov, an officer of the main intelligence directorate of the general staff of Russian Federation armed forces, was detained in Chernigiv.

On the same day, a Russian citizen named Oleg Bakhtiar, one of the leaders of the Eurasian Youth Union of Russia, was detained in Kyiv as he was preparing a group of people under the guise of civil activities for the criminal seizure of the Verkhovna Rada and the Cabinet of Ministers.

All of the arrestees confirmed being part of a network of persons conducting Russian subversive activities in Ukraine.

Intercepted radio communications of the aforementioned groups, and others, with their Russian coordinators are available and provide other clear evidence.

It has also been observed that such terrorist groups are heavily armed with weapons used exclusively by Russian armed forces, namely, the Kalashnikov assault rifle AK-100 series. Those weapons have also been seen in the hands of Russian troops in Crimea.

It is clear that the tactics used by terrorists to capture admininstrative buildings in the regions of Donetsk, Lugansk and Kharkiv are identical to those used to seize the buildings of the Crimean Parliament and other Governmental building in Crimea, which video evidence confirms. Terrorist groups are acting in a very organized and pre-planned manner. One of the goals is to equip as many locally recruited marginal people as possible with arms and ammunition. That is why the primary targets of terrorists have been local offices of police and security services with weapon storage facilities. As a result, several hundred guns and automatic rifles have been seized are now in the hands of terrorists.

There is substantial video evidence of armed attacks using gunfire on local Ukrainian police stations, in Slavyansk and Kramatorsk in particular. Those videos, which have been widely broadcast on international television channels and over the Internet, have left absolutely no doubt that the terrorist groups are not the peaceful protesters that our Russian colleagues claim them to be. Rather, they are professional special forces appropriately equipped and armed by the Russian Federation.

Terrorists have started using their weapons against Ukrainian law enforcement and military officers. This morning in Slavyansk the auto convoy of the Ukrainian military was attacked by gunmen using automatic weapons. Terrorists shot and killed Captain Gennady Belichenko of the Ukrainian security services, while "Alfa" Commander Kuznietsov and Colonel Kuksa were seriously wounded, as was a police officer named Selikhov.

In the light of the aforementioned facts, the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, pursuant to our anti-terrorism law of 2003, has adopted a decision to launch a large-scale counter-terrorist operation involving the special units of the Ukrainian armed forces. We are not going to let the Crimea scenario be repeated in eastern Ukraine. We have not imposed a state of emergency as is required by the

provisions of the Constitution of Ukraine. Instead, we have prepared a counterinsurgency plan to strike at the armed terrorists.

In his statement today, acting President Oleksandr Turchynov said,

> "I would like to emphasize that those not involved in shooting at Ukrainian law enforcement officers and who surrender their weapons and leave seized administrative buildings will not be subject to prosecution."

Only a few weeks have passed since part of the territory of Ukraine was annexed by the Russian Federation. And now Russia is applying the same tools — inciting separatists by waging unprecedented anti-Ukrainian propaganda in the mass media, distorting the truth about Ukraine, sending in special troops to seize administrative and law-enforcement buildings with the aim of destabilizing the situation in the eastern regions of Ukraine, and encouraging marginal groups to pursue their separatist ambitions, threatening my country's unity and territorial integrity. Apparently, through these attempts, they hope to disrupt the presidential elections in Ukraine scheduled for 25 May.

Russia often positions itself as a prominent fighter against international terrorism, but by sending its special agents to Ukraine to effect diversions and sabotage, it is actually sponsoring terrorism. Russia's statements and position are in fact supporting the terrorists in Ukraine who have seized administrative buildings, taken over the military arsenals of the Ukrainian secret services and police in several cities and opened fire on Ukrainian police. Today, official Russian TV channels have widely broadcast interviews with the three individuals — former President Yanukovych, former Prosecutor General Pshonka and former Minister of the Interior Zakharchenko — who are suspected mass murderers in Ukraine. They are wanted internationally. Ukraine has repeatedly asked its Russian partners to extradite those suspects and provide the necessary assistance for their investigation. Unfortunately, the Russian Federation has refused to do that.

Ukraine is being subjected to a large-scale terrorist operation orchestrated by the Russian Federation in subregions of the eastern part of the country. That constitutes a serious threat not only to the security of the people of Ukraine but to international peace and stability as a whole. We consider it to be the Security Council's duty to find a proper and peaceful solution to this crisis. We once again call on our Russian partners to put an immediate halt to the actions aimed at undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We demand that they leave us in peace.

(*spoke in French*)

As Ambassador Araud said, this is truly a final cry of warning.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked to make an additional statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Many words have been spoken and many pronouncements made here today. But the first impression I would like to share with my colleagues is that they have not been looking at the clock. It is now 9.30 p.m. our time, which means that in Ukraine it is about 3.30 a.m. That means that in a couple of hours it will be Monday morning, 14 April. That is the date when it has been agreed that Mr. Turchynov's criminal decree sending Ukraine's military forces to suppress the protests will take effect.

We have heard many unfair pronouncements about Russia today, but of course the most unfair of all came from our Ukrainian colleague, who accused Russia of terrorism. Why did he not accuse those who terrorized his Government for months on end, up to 21 February, of terrorism? They were people who really did terrorize the forces of law and order, who really did attack police and shoot at them and at those protesting against the authorities and seemed to be attacking their country. Why were they not called terrorists? Indeed, they have been exempted from any responsibility for the criminal activities they conducted for several months.

I reiterate that, unfortunately, several clumsy accusations have been made against Russia. It has been said that Russia somehow wishes to destabilize Ukraine, if not practically crush it altogether. But why was there no response to our call at the start of the crisis for launching a dialogue on how to help Ukraine emerge from the political and economic crisis it had found itself in? Why was the crisis encouraged to continue? Why was it only just a few days ago that the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and Poland said that the European Union and Russia should indeed talk about the economic prospects for Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova in connection with their joining the partnership programme of the European Union. And,

by the way, we have heard nothing about the fact that those ministerial conversations took place in Brussels.

Let us see what the response will be to the reproaches to Russia over the fact that we do not want supply Ukraine with gas for free. Let us see on 14 April what response the European ministers will give to the letter that President Putin wrote proposing that we work together to help Ukraine emerge from its economic turmoil. It is true that the people in Washington, D.C., to whom we did not send the letter, have already poisoned it for the European Union, calling it economic blackmail. But let us see whether the European Union has retained some kind of sovereignty and whether it is capable of making independent, rational decisions that can help to rescue the situation from crisis.

During the entire course of the crisis in Ukraine, Russia has never advocated aggravating it or destabilizing the country. We have absolutely no interest in doing such a thing, since for us Ukraine is too important as an economic and political partner and a country that is very close to us in many ways. We do not desire its destabilization. We are not to blame for what has produced the results that we are now witnessing. Mr. Fernandez-Taranco said that it was on 6 April that the actions were first observed whereby residents of south-eastern areas of Ukraine were seizing certain administrative buildings. And in this, of course, they learned from the experience of the Maidan in Kyiv, where for weeks and months administrative buildings were occupied, and which for some reason our Western partners saw as demonstrations of democracy.

But when it came to the south-eastern regions of Ukraine, somehow such tactics were unacceptable. A month and a half elapsed between 21 February and 6 April; a month and a half had gone by since the overthrow of President Yanukovych and the conclusion of the agreement that could have prevented an escalation of the situation. From the very beginning, all we said was that it was essential to conclude that agreement; that perhaps a constitutional assembly should be convoked; and that some decisive gesture should be made towards the south-eastern regions of Ukraine. Was any such gesture made? Finally, Mr. Yatsenyuk came, said something and left. Then Mr. Turchynov came the next day and did not seem to agree with him. It seemed they preferred to use force.

Incidentally, some very worrying tones have crept into our numerous contacts with our Western colleagues. As the Council knows, our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sergei Lavrov, has been talking to Secretary of State Kerry on the phone almost every day. Kerry continually claims to understand our concern that in contacts with the Ukrainian authorities genuine efforts should be made to ensure that they demonstrate a better grasp of the concerns of the south-eastern regions of Ukraine regarding a definition of their autonomy, independence and language rights. And then suddenly one of the United States Deputy Secretaries of State gets up in Congress and says, we know that these talks will not lead anywhere, but we have to occupy the time somehow. "Occupy the time." So, really, maybe somebody in Washington, D.C., is thinking about Turchynov's military offensive scenario. In which case, there is no need to accuse Russia of attempting destabilization.

The representative of the United States noted that Vice-President Biden will be going to Ukraine, it seems, on 21 April. But maybe he should not wait for 21 April. Maybe he should go right now. Pick up the phone, call Mr. Turchynov — as he called President Yanukovych more than once before 21 February — and say to him what he said to Mr. Yanukovych. As we were informed by the Vice-President's Chief of Staff, he said, "For God's sake, just do not use force. Call off your forces from the centre of Kyiv". That was what Mr. Biden said. And now, is the United States going to encourage the fulfilment of this criminal decree authorizing the use of military force? Why, in one case, when it was a question of preparations to storm the residence of the President of Ukraine, the call was that under no circumstances should force be used, while in the current situation, it is to encourage the insane military actions that Turchynov's decree talks about? I would therefore request Ms. Power to ask Vice-President Biden to call Mr. Turchynov right now, because in a few hours' time things might take an irreversible turn.

Many colleagues mentioned the meeting that was announced for 17 April. Indeed, for some months now, in particular during the period after 21 February, we have constantly encouraged such formats for dialogue as a possible way to achieve a solution to the crisis. We agreed in principle that the meeting would take place among the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Secretary of State Kerry, Ms. Ashton and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine. We very much hope that such a high-level meeting will encourage a broad political dialogue in Ukraine and show the way towards a political solution to the crisis.

But what does the Council think? If armed force is used and hostilities take place tomorrow, are we really going to sign off on that meeting? Of course, that initiative is going to be fundamentally undermined if military operations are commenced in south-eastern Ukraine.

Please, let us refrain from any accusations or speculation as to why Russia is trying to do what it is doing. Let us focus our attention on what we can actually do in this case. Here I am speaking to my Western colleagues. Let us ensure that we do not permit the Ukrainian authorities to commit the reckless actions that are currently enshrined in the criminal decree by Mr. Turchynov, and let us stop that decree from being implemented. That would have extremely significant consequences, first and foremost for the people of Ukraine, of course. That needs to be avoided.

The President: The representative of the United States has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I will be brief, but in response to my colleague from the Russian Federation, I would like to say just a few things.

First, the United States has constantly called for de-escalation and urged restraint. That has been our consistent policy. Our consistent statements have made clear that military force is not the answer, and we have commended the Ukrainians, frankly, for enduring more than probably any country in the United Nations could or would endure without using force. Therefore, there have been no shortage of efforts at diplomacy.

Secondly, it is not the United States that has escalated the situation, it is the Russian Federation.

Thirdly, while we would like to place our faith in talks with the Russian Federation, the European Union and Ukraine, it is hard to reconcile the behaviour of the Russian Federation, the propaganda of the Russian Federation and the military actions of the Russian Federation — which range from the massing of 40,000 troops on the border to the subversive activities inside Ukraine — with their appeal for diplomacy and de-escalation. It is an appeal that we wish were in fact sincere.

Fourthly, a few times, the representative of the Russian Federation has described what is happening in the eastern cities as protests and demonstrations. I would refer back to my French colleague's comment that those claims are rooted in some idea that the Internet does not exist and that people cannot see for themselves that they are not protests and they are not demonstrations. They are professional forces carrying weapons — Russian-made weapons, as it happens — and carrying out sophisticated, coordinated military operations across a substantial number of eastern Ukrainian cities. They are not demonstrations. They are not protests. They are military operations.

Finally, the credibility of the Russian Federation has been gravely undermined. That said, we remain eager and willing to talk about how to de-escalate the situation. That will require that the Russian Federation pull back its forces, which are ominously stationed and massed at the eastern Ukrainian border. It will require that the Russian Federation work to de-escalate the situation in the light of the armed takeover of those buildings. If, in fact, the Russian Federation is interested in peace and in upholding its role as an enforcer of international peace and security, then it will engage quickly and with a wholly different degree of conviction, urgency and truthfulness than it has up to this point.

The President: The representative of Ukraine has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): Several issues were raised by our Russian colleague. I would like to answer just one.

(*spoke in Russian*)

First, Mr. Churkin compared the situation in December and January with the current situation. We must recall that, at that time, the people were speaking out against the banditry of the authorities, and now it is bandits who are against the people. There is a difference there.

We cannot remain calm about the fact that several hundred separatists are holding thousands of people hostage to fear in towns. We see the standoffs on television in Kharkiv, Luhansk and Dnipropetrovsk. We cannot look on while small groups of armed people, headed up, inter alia, by agents from the Russian Federation, seize State buildings and take weapons to hand out. Indeed, those are terrorist operations that have been specially organized and orchestrated. Mr. Churkin is absolutely right, there is not much time left at all, there is just about an hour and a half. It is just as easy for him to call his President and say a few simple things to him as it is for me to do so, so I will

repeat them here. The statement that Mr. Churkin has referred very negatively to several times today was made by the acting President, Mr. Turchynov, and was addressed to those people who are now creating tension in those towns, the terrorist groups of separatists. He stated:

(*spoke in English*)

> "Those not involved in shooting at Ukrainian law enforcement officers and who will surrender their weapons and leave State administrative buildings will be released from prosecution."

(*spoke in Russian*)

Why do they not call their people and tell them to come back, sit down around the negotiating table and decide together how we can establish good neighbourly relations? That would be the right thing to do. The Government mentioned the referendum, changes to the Constitution, the retention of the language law and the fact that the problems that have cropped up over the decades and remained unsolved by previous Governments needed to be addressed at last. That is something that we need to do, but we are being prevented from doing so. I would like Mr. Churkin to listen to that and convey what he can to his Government.

(*spoke in English*)

I am sincerely thankful to the members of the Security Council who spoke in favour of a peaceful resolution of the problems in Ukraine. I am sincerely thankful for that. I also thank the members of the Security Council for understanding the critical situation in Ukraine and for any kind of support they can provide.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I shall not take up much of the Council's time. I should just like to say two things.

First, the representative of Ukraine is far too easy in characterizing his own people as bandits. The Right Sector and those who say the demonstrators should be killed are not bandits; they are simply the political elite of Kyiv. Are not those who are protesting in eastern Ukraine able to do so without Russia's say-so? Do they need Russia to say that events in Kyiv are unacceptable before they are able to grasp that? When radicals come to tell the miners of that region that they will establish their own order — surely the miners can understand that without a hint from Russia? Are the protesters able to understand how bad things have become only when Russian agents come to explain the situation to them? Do their own life experience and understanding of the situation in their own country count for nothing? How will those things influence them?

Secondly, with regard to the statement made by my American colleague Ms. Power, she did not mention her view on the decree to use armed force in eastern Ukraine. I hope that, as the Ukrainian representative has called for, following today's discussion some Western colleagues and partners will pick up the telephone and call their leaders and those in Kyiv with whom they enjoy influence, who may not act unless they get the green light from Western capitals. I would ask my colleagues to give them the red light and tell them that problems can be resolved through dialogue and not military confrontation.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 9.45 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7155

Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

Provisional

7155th meeting
Wednesday, 16 April 2014, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mrs. Ogwu	(Nigeria)
Members:	Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Ms. Sapag Muñoz de la Peña
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Araud
	Jordan	Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Oh Joon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Rwanda	Mr. Gasana
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security

Prevention and fight against genocide

Letter dated 11 April 2014 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2014/265)

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14-30187 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda.

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security

Prevention and fight against genocide

Letter dated 11 April 2014 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2014/265)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Somalia, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo and Turkey to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Ambassador Colin Keating to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2014/270, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2014/265, which contains the text of a letter dated 11 April 2014 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I wish to warmly welcome the Deputy Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Jan Eliasson, to whom I now give the floor.

The Deputy Secretary-General: "The genocide in Rwanda is one of the darkest chapters in human history". Those are the words of the Secretary-General — deeply moved — spoken in Kigali last week.

Today we remember the victims and the survivors as we continue to work to achieve justice for them and to prevent genocide and other mass atrocities anywhere in the world. We remember with heavy hearts the collective failure of the international community to recognize and act on the warning signs of genocide.

Twenty years ago, we saw yet again, after the Holocaust, how genocide was not a single event but a process that evolves over time, a process that requires planning and resources. That means that genocide can be prevented, with information and mobilization as well as with courage and political will.

We must continue to build on the lessons learned to improve our ability to protect populations from the most serious international crimes. Positive steps have been taken. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, alongside national trials, has held perpetrators to account. Tribunals and special courts for the former Yugoslavia, Cambodia and Sierra Leone have made similar inroads against impunity. The International Criminal Court has been central in the advance of international criminal law. The Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide now gathers information and sounds the alarm where there is a risk of genocide or other atrocities. Along with the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, he and other United Nations officials work on prevention and on helping countries build inclusive institutions and tolerant societies, with a focus on the resolution of grievances and disputes through peaceful means.

More broadly, the United Nations has progressively placed the promotion and protection of human rights at the core of our prevention work. The recently launched Rights Up Front initiative aims to improve our ability to respond to serious violations of human rights, which often are early warning signs of mass atrocities and of conflicts to come. The initiative is meant to generate early action and more active engagement by Member States and by the different entities of the United Nations system. We must be committed to doing our utmost to protect human lives in a very violent world.

The Rwanda genocide had a serious impact on the Great Lakes region. Twenty years later, the region is still seeing and dealing with the consequences. The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) established a Protocol for the Prevention and the Punishment of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes against Humanity and all Forms of Discrimination. Rwanda now chairs the Regional Committee to implement the Protocol. We count on Rwanda's leadership in the prevention of atrocities. Almost half of the States members of the ICGLR have established national committees on genocide prevention. I commend Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda for doing so.

As we mark the passage of 20 years since the genocide, we also pay special tribute to the impressive work of the Rwandan people for their own recovery and reconciliation. Rwanda has come a long way since 1994, and is one of the few countries that have established a national institution dedicated to the prevention of genocide. We encourage others to follow its lead and institutionalize prevention mechanisms.

Conflicts today, from Syria to South Sudan to the Central African Republic and beyond, sadly, show that the protection of populations from atrocities remains lagging and elusive. Those and other crises have different roots, yet there is a commonality. Across the landscape of conflict we see similar fault lines, divisions based on religion, ethnicity and even language. We see the rise of separatism, extreme nationalism and demonization of "the others": us versus them, our way or no way.

No part of the world is immune to that threat, and all of humankind is diminished by it. That means that all societies should assess their vulnerability and work at every level to build resilience, tolerance and vigilance in detecting early warning signals of crises to come. Let us reaffirm that the primary responsibility lies with States themselves.

Preventing atrocities also means establishing legitimate and accountable national institutions that are inclusive and credible in the eyes of the population. It means ensuring that the rule of law is respected and that all human rights are protected, without discrimination. It means managing diversity, supporting a strong civil society and allowing all peoples' voices to be heard.

In conclusion, we must do more as a community of nations and as global citizens if we are to live up to the promise of "never again" and act upon our collective responsibility to protect. Let us, in these days of so many acts of blind and brutalizing violence — and I look at the President as I say this and think of the recent atrocities committed in Nigeria — be guided and inspired by the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations, which reaffirms "the dignity and worth of the human person" and by the Charter, which urges us to "live together as good neighbours" in this world.

The President: I thank the Deputy Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Keating.

Mr. Keating: I want to thank all of the members of the Security Council for inviting me to participate in this briefing.

Twenty years ago, Madam President, your country, Nigeria, and mine, New Zealand, sat beside one another as members of the Council. I had the dreadful responsibility in April 1994 of presiding over a Council that refused to recognize that genocide was being perpetrated against the Tutsi in Rwanda and failed in its responsibilities to reinforce the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Rwanda in order to protect as many innocent civilians as possible.

My first responsibility today is therefore to remember the victims, the almost 1 million who died, and the survivors. It is good that the Council will today make its own commemoration of the genocide and discuss the need to prevent genocide in the future. This briefing also provides a fitting opportunity, for me in my capacity as former President of the Council in April 1994, to apologize for what we failed to do in 1994 and for that to be formally recorded in the official records of the Security Council.

Secondly, I want to acknowledge those Council members that joined with New Zealand in 1994 and supported our efforts to condemn the genocide and to reinforce the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR). In this regard, Nigeria deserves great credit, as do the Czech Republic and Spain. Two other members that gave support and encouragement were Argentina and Djibouti.

We must also remember those in the field who displayed great courage and did their best to protect civilians. Force Commander General Romeo Dallaire is first among these, as are the brave soldiers from Belgium and Senegal who gave their lives. I want to pay tribute especially to the major contingents from Ghana,

Senegal and Canada, which remained in Rwanda throughout the genocide. While sitting in Amahoro Stadium during the genocide commemoration in Kigali last week, I could not but recall the bravery of the United Nations soldiers who protected many thousands of Tutsi in that stadium during the genocide. I was also reminded that despite what many people believe, the United Nations did not desert Rwanda completely.

I also want to pay tribute to two organizations: the International Committee of the Red Cross and Médecins sans frontières. Both had their people in several locations outside Kigali. As President of the Council, I met with their New York representatives, usually every morning, and was able to update the Council with objective information from the field.

We all know how important the flow of information to the Council can be — especially information during the early stages of an emerging conflict, when there are still options for prevention or deterrence. In March and April 1994, the Council was not getting useful reports from the Secretariat. Even after the genocide had begun, events were being described for several weeks as simply a resurgence of the civil war. The wholesale slaughter of civilians was not being conveyed to the Council. Moreover, the Secretariat had concealed from the Council a critical piece of advice — a cable from the Force Commander in January 1994, which gave graphic early warning of probable genocide. And, in terms of early warning, a vital piece of evidence also existed in the United Nations system in Geneva — a report by a Special Rapporteur to the Commission on Human Rights warning of the likelihood of genocide. It was never drawn to the Council's attention.

All this confirms that there are many lessons about information, about early warning and about how to use information that I believe are still relevant today. I know there are hesitations among some here about the value of horizon-scanning, but if they want to take prevention seriously, then some creative alternative is desperately needed.

I need to explain what led the Council in April to downsize UNAMIR. Some months earlier, a permanent member was seeking to reduce the number of peacekeeping missions. It selected UNAMIR as a target for a special attention because of the slow progress in the peace negotiations in Arusha. It pushed for UNAMIR to be put on a very short leash. Accordingly, resolution 909 (1994) scheduled a review of the mandate for mid-May. Clear signals were given in consultations that there would be no agreement to renew the UNAMIR mandate if there were further obstacles in the Arusha peace process.

In hindsight, we can see that this was a naïve gift to the genocidaires in Kigali. Their ambassador was sitting as a member of the Council. They were privy to all the discussions in the informal consultations. They knew that the mandate was at risk. They had every reason to believe that all they had to do was to create conditions of chaos in Rwanda for the UNAMIR mandate to be terminated.

Against this background, all Council members will appreciate the political difficulties for those of us who were arguing for a reinforcement of UNAMIR. To reinforce UNAMIR required a new formal decision, but it was absolutely clear from the negotiations that a draft resolution to strengthen the force would meet with a veto. The task became even more difficult once some major troop contributors decided unilaterally to withdraw. Belgium had suffered serious losses; it believed all its troops were at risk and it began lobbying the Council and other troop contributors to evacuate. Some contingents, especially those that were lightly armed and lacked protective equipment, also feared for the safety of their personnel and wanted to leave. Thus, another challenge at that time was how to maintain the morale and confidence of the troop-contributing countries (TCCs).

To that end, I organized daily informal meetings between the President and the TCCs, and at the same time with Nigeria and others, seeking to negotiate the best possible compromise on the future of UNAMIR. But that compromise inevitably had to be a downsizing rather than reinforcement. For me, the bottom line was to keep UNAMIR in existence and to retain as many of the most effective troops as possible, because we knew that the Force Commander would use whatever capacity he had to protect as many civilians as he could, and we hoped that this would be a foundation for the early reinforcement of UNAMIR.

Perhaps this history demonstrates some lessons about the important and necessary interaction between the Council and troop contributors that I think are probably still relevant today.

I will now turn to the efforts of New Zealand and the Czech Republic, with the support of Argentina and Spain, to name and condemn the genocide. Despite

improved briefings by the Secretariat and the flow of information I was relaying to the Council from non-governmental organizations in the field, most of the permanent members were objecting. Their reasons varied, but the net result was that several members were blocking a draft presidential statement.

As the days wore on and the end of the month approached, New Zealand put in blue a draft resolution condemning the genocide. The words were drawn exactly from the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. As President, I announced that unless there were agreement on a presidential statement based on the exact language of the Genocide Convention, I would convene an open meeting of the Council at 11.55 p.m. on Saturday 30 April and put the draft resolution to the vote. Ultimately, presidential statement S/PRST/1994/21 was agreed, condemning the atrocities in Rwanda, using all of the language that we had proposed from the Genocide Convention, but at the insistence of some permanent members, the specific word "genocide" was removed.

In early May, New Zealand and Nigeria each introduced draft resolutions to reinforce the number of troops and to give the operation a formal mandate for the protection of civilians. But it took until 8 June before resolution 925 (1994) was adoped. Even then, the resolution was equivocal and did not allow full deployment. Ultimately, the genocide stopped only when the forces of the Rwandan Patriotic Front took control of the whole country.

That is the tragic history of April, May and June 1994. Time does not permit a detailed discussion of events in the following months, such as the mistaken decision of the Council to authorize Operation Turquoise or the events leading up to the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. But please permit me to make some brief final observations.

My first observation is a message of hope. I think it is very important to contrast the failure in 1994 regarding Rwanda with what the Council did in 2010 concerning Côte d'Ivoire. On Côte d'Ivoire, the Council members knew that there was a serious risk of ethnically based mass atrocities. They had good information from the Secretariat. They had put in place a proper protection mandate. The United Nations had properly resourced the Mission. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, through its Capstone Project, had in place a useful set of doctrines. The TCCs showed courage and determination, and they were well supported by the United Nations. Most importantly, Council members were fully agreed on the need for limited robust action to ensure protection.

I would like to add that the development of the principle of responsibility to protect, which is referenced so clearly in the draft resolution before the Council today, gives further reason for hope. Recent Council practice in Mali and the Central African Republic and with the Force Intervention Brigade in the Democratic Republic of the Congo further demonstrates that some important lessons have been learned.

My second observation relates to the belief in 1994 that the international community did not have the means to intervene in Rwanda; but it was false. In early April, just after the genocide began, a number of countries mounted a major unilateral military intervention in Rwanda. That was done to protect and extract foreign nationals, but those forces then departed. They left the Tutsi to their fate. Again in 1995, when the genocidaires and much of the civilian population had fled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a further major intervention was launched, this time in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Ironically, that was to help those who had undertaken the genocide. The truth is that there was no lack of capacity. What was missing, both in Rwanda in 1994 and again in 1995 when the Council failed to act to establish security in the camps in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was political will.

My third observation relates to the cascade of tragedy that can occur when there is a failure of political will, such as in 1994. The Deputy Secretary-General has already touched on this. A toxic accumulation of events unfolded and eventually embroiled the whole region. Twenty years later, we are still dealing with the consequences in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The failure in Rwanda in 1994 not only caused genocide, but also led to an appalling humanitarian catastrophe in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1995. That led directly to the civil wars in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to human tragedy on an even more massive scale. Some estimates suggest that up to 5 million may have died. Major instability has afflicted the whole region.

If we truly want prevention to work, then we need better political, operational and financial mechanisms for the Council and the wider United Nations system to

achieve better outcomes. I believe that this means new mechanisms for improved early warning, better systems for briefing and presenting options to the Council at the early stages of potential crises, enhanced preventive diplomacy, more effective use of Chapter VI tools of the Charter of the United Nations, quick preventive deployment, and, if all else fails, robust deterrence. I suggest that the costs of investing in such mechanisms would be insignificant when set alongside the dreadful human, political and financial costs of inaction that flowed from our collective failure in 1994 to respond to the genocide in Rwanda.

The President: I thank Ambassador Keating for his briefing.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Australia, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2150 (2014).

I now give the floor to members of the Security Council.

Mr. Gasana (Rwanda): Madam President, I thank you for organizing this important briefing as one of the events for the twentieth commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

Our briefers today have undoubtedly an extensive array of experience on the topic of the prevention of and fight against genocide. I welcome Ambassador Colin Keating of New Zealand, a man who, as a President of the Security Council in April 1994, witnessed a lurid moment of weakness of this organ 20 years ago, when he was calling for help for our people. I also acknowledge the presence of Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, a man who has rallied the United Nations system to learn from its failure in Rwanda in 1994 and who has played an important role in the liberation and promotion of our responsibility to protect. I thank both gentlemen, or let me say dear friends, for their briefings today.

I take the opportunity to thank all members of the Council for adopting unanimously resolution 2150 (2014) on the prevention and fight against genocide on the occasion of the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, during which Hutus and others were also killed. I also particularly thank all States Members of the United Nations that sponsored the resolution. It is our hope that the resolution will serve as a wake-up call and make a contribution, small as it may be, to preventing and fighting against future genocides.

In April 1994, more than a million people were slaughtered in Rwanda during the 100 days between April and July 1994. That is 10,000 people every day for the sole crime of being born Tutsi. Others — Hutus, Twas and foreign citizens — were also killed for opposing the genocide and for carrying out their obligation to protect their fellow humans. The systemic slaughter of men, women and children was perpetrated in full view of the international community. The genocide against the Tutsi highlighted the extent to which methods of prevention at the United Nations failed utterly. In that regard, my Minister for Foreign Affairs, Louise Mushikiwabo, at the launch of the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary in Rwanda back in January, raised a pertinent question that I believe the Security Council should endeavour to respond to in the years ahead. Her question was that today, if the international community had at its disposal the information and capacity to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe, as it did in 1994, would it act differently?

In 1994, the issue was not a lack of information about the true picture of what was happening in Rwanda. It was not a lack of a legal characterization of the crimes that were committed. It was not a lack of budgets or funding. As Ambassador Keating wrote, it was simply a lack of political will. A lack of political will on the part of permanent members of the Council, who held veto power; a lack of political will on the part of the United Nations Secretariat, which deliberately gave erroneous information in the Secretary-General's reports that contradicted the true information coming from the United Nations Force Commander; a lack of political will on the part of the troop-contributing countries that pulled out their troops, leaving those who had run to them for protection at the mercy of Interhamwe militias. As President Paul Kagame said on 7 April, "genocide prevention demands historical clarity of all of us".

It is therefore our duty to recall that genocide was carried out in Rwanda owing to complete systemic indifference between and during the tragedy. Twenty years later, we should ask if the broader international community, and the United Nations in particular, is capable of being any better at preventing a repeat of Rwanda in 1994 from happening elsewhere. On this issue, President Kagame clearly stated, in the same speech on 7 April, that

> "[n]o country, in Africa or anywhere else, ever needs to become another Rwanda. But if a people's choices are not informed by historical clarity, the danger is ever present".

The horrific scenes coming from the Central African Republic, Syria and South Sudan will in some cases convince many that the United Nations is still struggling to match its normative principles with realities on the ground, and that the prevention of mass atrocities still has a long way to go. This was evident in the fact that the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda materialized in spite of the adoption four decades earlier of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and despite the inherent responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Since the tragedy that occurred in Rwanda, the Organization has deployed efforts to prevent genocide and mass atrocities by improving the capacity of the United Nations system, mobilizing the political will of key Member States and trying to learn lessons from the failures of the recent past — without, however, reaching their full potential. Those efforts range from endorsement in 2005 at the World Summit of the concept of the responsibility to protect; the enhancement of the agenda on the protection of civilians through normative frameworks; the creation of the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide; and, in relation to the responsibility to protect, the implementation of the Rights Up Front action plan as a tool for the United Nations to improve prevention by instituting a due-diligence policy on human rights to help enforce United Nations purposes and principles as set out in the Charter.

With the work and jurisprudence of the United Nations criminal tribunals, including the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and the special mixed tribunal in Sierra Leone and other international criminal mechanisms, the importance of accountability for perpetrators has been highlighted. It was our hope that the combination of all those efforts would result in a robust and effective architecture. As the concept note (S/2014/265, annex) puts it, the key question today is whether such capacity is adequate, or if there are areas that need sustained improvement. Without going into detail, anyone in this Chamber would agree that sustained improvement is required.

It is regrettable that some of the initiatives adopted in good faith in the United Nations by Member States and aimed at preventing and fighting genocide have encountered various challenges in their implementation and created controversies among States. Today, some of the viable initiatives, such as the International Criminal Court, are prone to political manipulation and abuses, which in turn contradict the original intentions in creating such mechanisms. Other initiatives are still ill equipped and without sufficient capacity to discharge their functions, which in the long run hinders the translation of normative frameworks into practical preventive tools that match the realities on the ground. As a result, some of those efforts may not amount to much, and the pledges of "never again" will sound just as hollow today as they were after the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

It is true that the severity of the challenges that must be overcome for preventive action to be timely and effective are immense. On any given day, not just at the level of the United Nations but also within Member States, policymakers are grappling with many pressing tasks relating to crises unfolding somewhere in the world. Focusing on a problem that has not yet surfaced is clearly very difficult, but we believe that this is the task that this Organization should have mastered by now, over the nearly seven decades of its existence. It requires immense effort and willpower to overcome the many political, financial and operational obstacles.

We believe that more emphasis should be placed on reducing the risk of genocide and mass atrocities in order to reduce the need for crisis response. Investing in the areas that address the root causes of conflicts, such as improving the quality of democratic governance and human rights, establishing strong institutions, promoting economic performance, reducing poverty and inequality, and ensuring national reconciliation will, over time, lower that risk. We also believe that more effort should be put into United Nations crisis preparedness as opposed to crisis improvisation.

In that context, operational capacities should be developed well ahead in order to manage commonly recurring situations and to improve institutional responsiveness. In other words, the United Nations should have the capacity to deploy quickly rather than mobilizing for that deployment when a crisis erupts. That can be harnessed to regional and subregional arrangements, most of which are in the process of creating standby brigades. It is also very important that the international community invest greatly in strengthening the capacity of local and regional actors, given their higher incentive to respond to conflicts and crises in their proximity.

In that regard, we welcome the statement delivered by the Secretary-General in Kigali on 7 April during the twentieth commemmoration of the genocide against the Tutsi, which we believe is a paradigm shift of the Organization:

> "I have sent my own signal to United Nations representatives around the world. My message to them is simply this: when you see people at risk of atrocity crimes, do not wait for instructions from afar; speak up, even if it may offend. Act. Our first duty must always be to protect people — to protect human beings in need and distress."

So let the entire United Nations system put in place the infrastruture to implement such a shift in policy. It is a priority.

Before I conclude, let me say that Rwanda is grateful to the Security Council that resolution 2150 (2014) condemns without reservation any denial of the genocide in Rwanda. We therefore reiterate our call on all Member States to support the fight against the denial of the genocide, which is a denial of the right to memory, healing and reconciliation, and the obligation to learn lessons from the past.

In conclusion, I would like to quote Ambassador María Cristina Perceval of Argentina, who stated the following at a meeting of Security Council members with President Kagame, held on 7 October 2013 in Kigali.

> "When I hear you, Mr. President, I remember the history of my country. I came here to see, to learn and to understand, not to point fingers. Genocide is not a slogan; it is in our body, and the shadow of the past is the light of tomorrow."

Let us learn from that bitter past of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda in order to better prevent and fight against future genocide and mass atrocities. Again, a special thanks to all my colleagues on the Security Council, who not only voted for the resolution but also all of whom, exceptionally, co-sponsored it.

Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan): This morning, we make statements in remembrance of those who suffered so cruelly and in such great numbers 20 years ago in Rwanda. But, as so many before us have said, on other such sombre occasions, can statements ever meet the needs of a moment such as that, when more than 800,000 lost souls, still 20 years later, must be asking: Well? Have the 15 members of the Security Council, particularly the permanent members, learned anything from our slaughter after we were beaten, carved up by machetes or shot over the course of 100 days?

What words would we, the current members of the Security Council, use? What words would be immune to the inevitable mockery and cynical laughter of the people of the Central African Republic, whose relatives have been killed or who have fled their homes in huge numbers. Once we strip away the obvious differences between the Rwanda of 1994 and the Central African Republic of 2014, even with the welcome early African and French deployments to that country and the adoption of resolution 2149 (2014), other aspects of the way in which the United Nations confronts such crises have, regrettably, remained the same. The long deployment time lag is still there, as are the concerns over securing troop contributors in sufficient numbers. Financial constraints also apply and, ultimately, are we not too late again? We all care — yes, maybe — but it is equally clear that we still do not care enough to act immediately and overwhelmingly in those cases where an intervention is needed.

We do not care enough because the labels by which we identify ourselves and others still hide from view the obvious crucial point. While those who were killed 20 years ago met a sudden and brutal death because they were Tutsis or moderate Hutus who opposed the genocide, it is not because of who they were, Tutsi or moderate Hutu, that we mourn them. We honour and remember them today because they were people, humans, like us. Our very categorization of humans according to race, nationality, religion, ethnicity and circumstances of birth still overwhelmingly defines how we see each other. The inevitable stacking is then

there, whereby many of us dangerously view ourselves, and are viewed, as more important than others. That has been humanity's principal curse. Our tendency towards classification, based on only one point of reference, is the foundation for ethnic extremism and ethnic nationalism. Those, in turn, abuse and corrupt victimhood.

The alarming fact is that most of the killers in Rwanda were not raving sadists or psychopaths. Most of the killers were ordinary people. If our historical understanding of genocides and mass killings tells us anything, it is that ordinary people in very specific circumstances will behave with a cruelty never thought imaginable to them, let alone their victims. Even after they commit such horrific crimes, few are able to express remorse without some offer of a quid pro quo, for they can almost not believe it themselves. Of all the representatives sitting here in the Chamber, more than we would ever dare imagine could potentially commit mass atrocities in extreme and unusual conditions. Whether we would be one of them, we would never know unless, to our great misfortune, we found ourselves enveloped by that toxin we call mass atrocity. That is what our understanding of genocide tells us.

Part of what makes it possible for ordinary people to become something else entirely is fear. It is as if fear switches off the higher cerebral functions one by one and, as it balloons in the mind, it finally extinguishes empathy. Whatever capacity for thought is left in that shrunken mind falls into a self-reinforcing closed loop, where the killing, even of children, has been rationalized as just. After the atrocities, those beings become human again. Yet their guilt has been edited so heavily by their returning reason that it becomes distorted: Was it not, after all, an understandable case of preventive self-defence, they rationalize. If we had not tried to kill all of them, they eventually would have killed us all. It is simple.

Fear, based on lies and fed by extreme ideologies, grinds the morality in many individuals down to nothing, leaving only the primitive shell of a being. Fear is the fuel of genocide. It also creates hesitation in those who could intervene to stop it. The events in Somalia in 1993 shaped the international response to Rwanda in 1994, as Ambassador Keating has analysed thoughtfully in his writings. It did not help that Rwanda was then on the Council, which made the Secretariat hesitate in sharing more broadly General Dallaire's cable of 11 January. Hesitation produces the excuses and the very rationality for cowardice.

If fear is our enemy then courage must be our friend, and not one that is rarely seen, but one that will be with us when needed most. We, the individual members of the Council, need the courage to contribute more to United Nations peacekeeping, not just to order it and shape it, or even to finance it, but to share in the danger and to participate in it with vigour. The Secretariat needs the courage to give us the unedited truth; we need the courage to recognize it; and they, the peacekeepers, need the courage to protect civilians in extreme circumstances, with or without a mandate. In such circumstances, what would mandates matter anyway?

In addition, we need the courage to understand that our methods of work in the Council generate a sense of routine that is deadening and dangerous. And we need the courage to confront the basic fact that, whatever its remaining weaknesses, there is no alternative to the International Criminal Court. The sooner we all strengthen it and adhere to it, the sooner it will fulfil its stated mission to end impunity for all such crimes.

And finally, on courage, my delegation will submit a draft resolution for adoption in due course by the Council, with the aim of instituting a distinctive United Nations medal for extreme bravery. The Secretary-General would award it to those military and civilian United Nations personnel who demonstrate outrageous courage in the face of the most incredible and continuous danger when saving or rescuing people from almost certain death, in the service of humankind and the United Nations. And it must be called the Mbaye Diagne medal for exceptional courage in honour of the greatest hero the United Nations has ever had.

Captain Mbaye Diagne of Senegal was killed after he had saved hundreds of, perhaps even a thousand, Rwandans from death. That he did so unarmed and practically on his own at a time when the Tutsis and moderate Hutus of Rwanda were disowned shamefully by almost the entire internationai community makes Diagne's feat all the more humane and distinguished. And I urge the members to see or listen to a moving BBC TV and radio documentary called "A Good Man in Rwanda".

There were others too, like General Romeo Dellaire and his Deputy, General Henry Anyidoho, as well as United Nations military observers, humanitarian aid

workers and journalists who, working together with many courageous Rwandans, behaved honourably in the impossible circumstances of 20 years ago.

The draft resolution will propose that the Secretary-General establish a team to design the Diagne medal and to create an external committee comprising a diverse and select group of former peacekeepers to review all proposals and to confirm all submissions to guard against unwarranted recognition. The General Assembly should also consider creating a special fund to help families of those meriting the award. The medal would have to be presented by the Secretary-General to the recipient or next of kin in a formal ceremony witnessed by the full membership of the Security Council.

Now is the right time for the Security Council to recognize those who labour on its behalf and whose humanity and courage in theatres of war far exceeds our own by a very considerable amount. And we need to inspire ourselves and all United Nations personnel serving in the field to be like them, if we are ever to end the wickedness we refer to as genocide permanently. Only then, can we utter to the souls of those who were murdered in Rwanda 20 years ago, "Yes, we, the members of the Security Council, have learned; we have changed."

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to thank Mr. Jan Eliasson and Mr. Keating for their briefings. We listened with great emotion and attention to the statement made by the representative of Rwanda.

Today we remember the tragic events of 1994 in Rwanda, which for the past 20 years have evoked in the international community not only a feeling of horror, but also a deep sense of guilt for the slaughter that took place at end of the twentieth century — events that could and should have been prevented. The history of the last century, and especially the terrible lessons of the Second World War, should have taught us that signs of genocide must be fought with resolve and without pandering to those who espouse a xenophobic ideology for short-term political goals. The Russian people, some of whom were sentenced by the Nazis, like many other peoples were, to physical annihilation, paid a ghastly price — the lives of tens of millions of fallen soldiers and civilians, women, the elderly and children.

It seems that humankind has not learned the bloody lessons of history. Nazi criminals were tried and, as a result of the victory over fascism, we established a new international system. The 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the 1968 Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity were adopted. They have allowed certain actions to be qualified as genocide and ensured that there is legal accountability for them.

Nevertheless, in the late twentieth century, the international community was able neither to recognize in time the signs of distress coming from a small African country, nor to rescue its people. One of the most horrifying instances of genocide occurred before our eyes with almost complete inaction on the part of the United Nations. How was that possible? In 1994, there was already a United Nations peacekeeping Mission in Rwanda. Why was it powerless in the face of the horrific bloodshed that led to the genocide?

We believe that the answer to those questions lies in the conclusions of the report of the commission to carry out an independent inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda (see S/1999/1257, annex), which was created in the wake of the Rwandan tragedy. The commission came to the conclusion that the main reason for the United Nations total failure to prevent the genocide was that States, and even the itself Organization itself, lacked sufficient political will for decisive action, even though all the necessary instruments and the legal basis required for making decisions already existed.

However, somebody raised the issue of protecting staff in the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda or helping to save their compatriots who were in the country. Someone thought first and foremost about their internal political needs and someone thought about maintaining their political influence in the country. And someone simply did not pay sufficient attention to the horrifying news coming from Kigali, attributing it instead to the particularities of the African continent. Indeed, the United Nations betrayed Rwanda and the cost of that betrayal was approximately 1 million human lives.

What conclusion can we draw today as we commemorate such a tragic anniversary? We must continue the work being carried out by the United Nations to correct our mistakes. Yet such mistakes continue to be made, as evidenced by what is being proposed by several Security Council members with

regard to the establishment of a United Nations mission in Syria, which would somehow supposedly to stop the violence and give the Security Council more objective information on what is going on there.

It is important to stop using political forces that preach nationalistic and sometimes extremist ideas for short-term goals. It is important to understand once and for all that a policy of accommodating such forces can lead to the most tragic and destructive results. It was no surprise that the need to protect and promote the fundamental rights of minorities, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, race or religion, was raised yet again at the recent International Conference on Genocide Prevention in Brussels. Similarly, the importance of measures to prevent incitement to violence based on ethnic or religious hatred was also underscored.

We call on all countries to effectively strengthen international and regional cooperation to achieve those goals in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. That should be the focus of the Secretariat, particularly of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide. In that context, determining genuine priorities and appropriate goals is highly important. Theoretical research, when truly necessary, should be fully integrated into the framework of existing international legal foundations.

Today as we mourn with the people of Rwanda, we should remember that our fragile world requires our joint efforts in order to meet its current challenges.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation thanks the Nigerian presidency for convening this meeting. I thank Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson for his briefing. I also listened attentively to Mr. Keating's statement.

Twenty years ago, the people of Rwanda were subjected to unprecedented carnage in which hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed. That was a dark page in the annals of humankind and should be remembered forever. Over the past 20 years, the Government and people of Rwanda have spared no effort in promoting national reconciliation, safeguarding national stability and restoring economic and social development. Remarkable results have been achieved. China expresses sincere best wishes to the Government and people of Rwanda for continuing to achieve new results on the path of national reconstruction.

Over the past 20 years, the international community has continued to reflect on the lessons learned from the Rwandan genocide and has spared no effort in preventing the recurrence of a similar tragedy. As the core mechanism for collective security, the Security Council has engaged actively in recent years in various actions to prevent and resolve conflicts, and played an important positive role in the maintenance of regional peace and security.

Regarding ways to promptly prevent and effectively respond to various conflicts and potential crises involving new situations so as to prevent the recurrence of genocide, I wish to stress the following three points.

First, preventing and containing conflicts is the most effective fundamental manner by which to prevent genocide. Ethnic and religious disputes, lack of development and weak capacities, among other factors, can potentially generate ethnic tensions, aggravate social conflicts and even lead to bloody conflict. In order to contain and eliminate the root causes of conflict, it is necessary to take integrated measures to treat symptoms and root causes alike by promoting inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation and creating a peaceful environment that is conducive to ethnic harmony and unity. In a pluralistic society of diverse ethnicities and religions, it is all the more necessary to promote dialogue among different ethnic groups, advocate peace, harmony and inclusiveness, strengthen social cohesion, enhance understanding and trust, and prevent discrimination and confrontation.

Secondly, in order to effectively prevent genocide, countries and their Governments should fulfil their duties and obligations. Governments bear the primary responsibility in protecting their civilians. Governments and parties to conflicts should all abide by international humanitarian law and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, among other international obligations, and spare no effort to protect civilians from genocide.

The international community should respect the lead role of the countries concerned and, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, provide constructive support. Regional organizations have a deeper understanding of the situation on the ground and the root causes of conflicts and tensions. They also enjoy closer ties with the parties concerned. The United Nations and regional organizations should strengthen coordination and cooperation in order to take full advantage of synergies aimed at actively supporting the efforts of the countries concerned in the protection of civilians. The legal

systems of the countries concerned should constitute the main channels for ensuring due process and justice for the victims of genocide, based on full respect for their legal traditions and genuine needs.

Thirdly, the international community should prioritize assistance to the countries concerned in achieving economic growth and social progress in order to eliminate economic and social causes of conflict. The international community should use dialogue, good offices and mediation, among other tools, to promote the settlement of disputes and differences to prevent and contain the escalation of conflict and halt genocide and other crimes against humanity at the source.

In parallel, the international financial institutions and development agencies should strengthen their efforts in African and other developing countries to fulfil all of their commitments in terms of assistance and debt reduction and in raising the resources necessary for Africa's comprehensive development, strengthening capacity-building and providing political, financial and technical support.

The events of the past should be recalled as lessons for the future. The tragedy of Rwanda 20 years ago has left a permanent scar on the memory of humankind. The international community should draw profound lessons from those events and dedicate itself to maintaining peace, enhancing common development, eliminating the root causes of conflict, promoting harmony and coexistence among various ethnic groups, and pooll their efforts in building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I thank the Government of Nigeria for organizing this important meeting. I thank the Deputy Secretary-General for his remarks and his commitment, and that of the United Nations to doing better. My appreciation goes as well to Ambassador Keating for sharing with us his experience and many insights. All who are privileged to serve on the Security Council must learn from what the world let happen in 1994. Ambassador Keating has helped us to do that.

Nigeria, New Zealand, Spain and the Czech Republic were given special praise last week by the Rwandan Government for their efforts during the genocide. Now, thanks to Ambassador Keating, we can add Argentina and Djibouti to that short list of those that were up-standers — not bystanders — during the worst horrors to occur since the Holocaust.

Nine days ago, I had the privilege to join representatives from across the globe in Kigali to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide. We bowed our heads in remembrance of the more than 800,000 men, women and children who were so ruthlessly deprived of life. We rededicated ourselves to assisting in the still-unfinished task of recovery, reconciliation and reintegration and joined with President Kagame in saluting the unbreakable Rwandan spirit, as he put it, that has enabled the people of that beautiful land to build a better future without forgetting the past.

As dignitaries sat solemnly at the ceremony, however, we began to hear the screams and wails of Rwandan women — mothers, wives, daughters and sisters — who gave haunting voice to what every survivor must feel, and not just on anniversaries. Every single day the people of Rwanda, including many at the Rwandan Mission here in New York, and their families live without those who matter most to them. Two hundred people had to be carried out of Amahoro Stadium last week, convulsed by grief. Millions more live with that daily despair.

The stadium itself where we sat was the stadium that during the genocide sheltered 12,000 people who lived in complete squalor under the eye of General Dallaire's dwindling force. The stadium itself will always be a reminder of what the United Nations might have been able to accomplish if its top officials and the United States and other leading Member States had sent United Nations reinforcements rather than extracting most of the peacekeepers on the ground.

As President Clinton has said many times, the failure of the United States to act during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda is his greatest regret. All of us, whether we were in Government or not, in the Security Council or not, must look inward to consider what more we might have done.

Today we consider again the paramount question of lessons learned — learned not just in theory or on paper but truly understood, felt and applied in practice. In so doing, we benefit from instruments that did not exist two decades ago, including the Office of the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Criminal Court, the responsibility to protect doctrine, improvements in regional peacekeeping capabilities — and in that regard I would note in particular the participation of

Rwandan peacekeepers who perform exceptionally and admirably in the cause of atrocity prevention in the Central African Republic and elsewhere — more nimble deployment of accountability mechanisms, and a welcome surge within civil society of anti-genocide awareness and activism.

I mention that last dimension in particular because during the genocide in Rwanda, while 800,000 people were killed, one American Member of Congress, Patricia Schroeder, explained the United States response by noting that her home state of Colorado was home to a research organization that studied Rwanda's imperilled gorilla population. As she puzzled publicly over the United States response and described United States citizen engagement, she said

> "there are some groups terribly concerned about the gorillas. But — it sounds terrible — people just do not know what can be done about the people".

All of the political pressures cut in favour of avoiding action rather than creatively responding to help a people in desperate need. Political calculuses should not dictate our response. As a global community, we recognize that mass atrocities may emerge from a variety of scenarios. We have begun to identify telltale patterns and indicators. We have agreed on the value of vigilance to prevent unstable situations from unravelling. We have affirmed — all of us — the duty of each Government to protect its citizens from mass atrocities. We have stated our preparedness under the Charter of the United Nations to respond when States require help in fulfilling that duty.

In some cases, from Timor-Leste and Liberia to Sierra Leone, Libya, Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire, we have joined with local partners to end or deter violence. Recently, we made progress in assisting the Democratic Republic of the Congo and strengthening the United Nations in their fight against those militia who continue to attack and rape civilians. We have intensified diplomatic efforts to restore peace in South Sudan, and the United Nations there has not only provided emergency supplies to populations displaced by recent fighting but it has importantly opened its doors in an unprecedented way, allowing its bases to become islands of protection. The Africans and French deployed to try to prevent mass atrocities in the Central African Republic. We quickly authorized a commission of inquiry, and now we have authorized a United Nations peace operation to address the unfolding catastrophe there. We must get African, European and United Nations forces deployed urgently.

Overall, however, it is both fair and profoundly unsatisfying to admit that our successes have been partial and that the crimes against humanity that persist are devastating. Yesterday, many of us attended an Arria formula meeting in which we saw graphic photographs taken in Syrian prisons showing systematic, industrial-style slaughter and forced starvation killings of approximately 11,000 detainees. Those photos were taken in just three of the 50 Syrian-run detention centres in Syria. To that, we can add the Syrian victims of chemical weapons attacks, the children felled by barrel bombs and those being starved to death in besieged towns and villages or those executed by terrorist groups. Twenty years from now, how will we reflect on the Security Council's failure to help those people? How will we explain Council disunity on Syria 20 years after Rwanda?

Too often we have done too little, waited too long or been caught unprepared by events that should not have surprised us. Moving forward, we have to do a better job of confronting and defeating the practitioners of hate. Part of protecting against mass atrocities is preventing the conditions that allow them — rampant discrimination, denial of human dignity and the codification of bigotry. No one should be targeted for violence simply because of who are they or what they believe.

In our collective effort to prevent mass atrocities, we must make creative use of every tool we have — human rights monitoring, diplomatic missions, technical assistance, arms embargoes, smart sanctions, peace operations, judicial inquiries, truth commissions, courts and other measures designed to influence the calculations of perpetrators who every day are deciding how far they are going to go. Every day they are doing a cost-benefit analysis in their heads about whether the costs of moving forward exceed the benefits they see in their often warped perspective.

We must also be innovative in taking advantage of new technology, like the unmanned aerial vehicles now being deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and even text messaging, which is being used to raise alarms, track the movements of outlaw groups, gather evidence of criminal violations, and naturally we must always deliver aid to those in desperate need.

We must also remember that preventing mass atrocities is a global responsibility requiring robust contributions from all. In particular, we need to train and equip peacekeepers who head into harm's

way. More countries should do their share, whether through soldiers, civilians, enablers or other forms of contribution. I echo my Rwandan colleague's point that, 20 years after the Rwandan genocide, we should have moved further beyond what he called "crisis improvisation". Further, we must enhance the bonds of trust between us. Historic differences within or between regional groups must neither lessen our capabilities nor diminish our willingness to act as one.

Finally, we must ask every State to consider whether there is more that it can to do remove the political roadblocks that impede effective action. Again, with thousands of lives at stake in Syria and elsewhere, obstruction is untenable and cooperation is a moral and strategic imperative. Tomorrow afternoon we will also have a chance to shine a spotlight on the horrors going in the darkness of North Korea.

Our task is as straightforward as it is vital — to ensure that when our successors gather in this Chamber two decades from now they will not speak of more lost opportunities and failures. Instead, their words will be of respect — respect for the comprehensive anti-atrocity steps we took together. Let them say in their time that we in our time moved beyond deadlock to unity, beyond remembrance to mobilization and beyond mere promises to the kind of bold and concrete actions that end wars and stop genocide before the searing pain it causes can be heard in the cries of those left behind.

Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea): First of all, the Republic of Korea joins Rwanda and the international community in commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide. The reverberation of what happened 20 years ago is still echoing in our thoughts and conscience. We thank you, Madam President, for providing this timely opportunity to remember and to build on the lessons of that tragic event. Our appreciation also goes to Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and Ambassador Colin Keating, whose briefings help us to renew our commitment to "never again".

Based on the lessons of the Rwanda genocide, the United Nations and Member States have worked together to prevent another terrible humanitarian ordeal. We have made efforts to strengthen the institutional capacities of the international community to address grave crimes against humanity through international and national criminal justice systems. The establishment of the Human Rights Council is significant in that it can play an important early-warning role by maintaining vigilance over any grave violations of human rights and crimes of mass atrocity. Empowering various United Nations peacekeeping missions throughout the world with a clearer mandate to protect civilians is also an important step in the right direction. The Secretary-General's calls, including the Rights Up Front initiative and the open-gate policy, have been playing a catalysing role to boost the moral authority and operational reach of the United Nations. However, there are still challenges to face before we can claim that past lessons have been fully acted upon.

For one thing, there is work to be done to narrow the gap between the desperation of people in dire situations and the aspiration of the international community to help them. Formulating an international contingency plan that can be promptly invoked in a serious humanitarian crisis may be one way to address these challenges. Promoting regional cooperation and partnerships with non-governmental organizations in this field, such as the recent Brussels International Conference on Genocide Prevention, is a path that should be explored further.

How to deal with the culture of impunity is another big challenge. In that regard, we appreciate the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). The international community needs to continue support to the ICTR in order that it can conclude its work in accordance with the completion strategy.

In a broader context, international cooperation to bring all fugitives to justice should be strengthened. We call for more support for the International Criminal Court, the only permanent international criminal justice mechanism.

The responsibility of States to protect their own people should be given more attention, and the discussions on the responsibility to protect should produce more tangible results.

As we learned the hard way, successful efforts to stop the most egregious humanitarian crimes require our collective wisdom and close cooperation. We should join forces and do everything we can so that our commitment to "never again" does not slip into another agonizing resignation of "again and again".

Mrs. Perceval (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, Madam President, I would like to convey the solidarity of the people and the Government of Argentina to the people and the Government of your country, Nigeria. Humankind has no right to suffer.

Argentina does not sponsor draft resolutions for reasons of technical or timely factors that may or may not be present in a given draft resolution. As in this case, we do so when the goal of the draft resolution entails reaffirming the absolute validity and unquestionable force of the purposes and principles of the United Nations, in particular the promotion and protection of human rights and the individual freedoms of all without distinction of any sort. We also do so because that is State policy in our country. We do so when, as in this case, we have no doubt that the international community must set aside its feint-heartedness to raise its voice in the certainty that only memory, truth, justice and reparations will prevent the repetition of massive crimes of atrocity such as the genocide that took place in Rwanda in 1994 — and not just in Rwanda, but throughout the entire world. We do so when not doing so would run counter to the legal and moral imperative we have as Members of the Organization and of the Security Council, but especially as men and women who share a common humanity.

In the face of the horror he faced, an Argentine thinker said that genocide was the context in which, with dark and monstrous evidence, one could see the absolute evil that naked power was able to do to other human beings. All genocide raises the most important of questions: where lies the ever-present, dark abyss of humankind, wherein the roots of our own society are found? At the same time, we know that all human tragedy is, collectively and individually, an impetus for a new beginning. Rwanda knows that, as do we peoples who have suffered genocide, State terrorism, massacres and mass killings. We know that tragedy means a new beginning. It demands one. It is an opportunity to think anew about what it means for us to build a society. We know that transitions are not easy or the same, nor do we undergo them in the same way. Here, too, one cannot impose on a people that it build memory in a single way. One question leads to another and it seems there are no definitive answers. Like victims, memory is unique. Memory is creative.

That is why remembering genocide does not mean shedding light on a set of fragmentary experiences or a list of horrors and random events. It would be obscene to do so. Remembering genocide is to seek meaning, for there exists a horrendous abyss within society as well as within ourselves. That abyss separates us from the past that horrifies us and the idea that the future demands that we think, believe and trust that the life to which we want to do justice and the world we deserve to live in can be different. We need to make the world different, beginning today. We can do so with truth, memory, justice and reparations, because for our people the future means the present that exists in our memory.

As has been pointed out, Argentina was a member of the Security Council in 1994. On 16 May of that year, following the introduction of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Rwanda (S/1994/565), we had no hesitation in saying (see S/PV.3377) that, since the events of 6 April — the atrocious violence, abuse and systematic slaughter that had been unleashed — Rwanda had found itself plunged into a humanitarian crisis of enormous proportions and a situation of horror for which there was no justification whatever. At that time, Argentina claimed that systematic and widespread violations of humanitarian law in Rwanda, as well as all human rights violations that had stunned the world, should be thoroughly investigated. In July of that same year, when mass slaughter of communities and families — not only majority Tutsi, but also Hutu and others who had denounced the violence and horror — confirmed that the atrocities committed in Rwanda qualified as crimes of genocide, Argentina unequivocally affirmed that crimes of such magnitude must not be covered up or minimized, or enjoy impunity.

In that context, and in the memory of the victims, this commemoration represents a valuable opportunity to reflect on the three dimensions that we must bear in mind when we speak of genocide.

First, the protection of populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity — including incitement to hatred — has only one name: prevention.

Secondly, we must strengthen human rights norms and international humanitarian law, democratic institutions and a social culture in which the recognition and respect for differences and diversity alienate us definitively from an ideology of hatred that is not of the left, right or centre. The ideology of hatred is the ideology of hatred, in which hell is other people. We must therefore strengthen not only substantive law but our ethical conscience and the legitimate foundations of national and international democratic society.

Thirdly, with respect to the fight against impunity, I recall that my mother used to cite Saint Theresa, saying that more tears have been shed over prayers that have been heard than over those that have not. We live

with that reality every day. Every single day, we hear the prayers being said and we see the tears being shed. What matters is our decision to listen, because these are the voices of the victims. It is not only a question of having a good normative architecture or solid and just legal institutions. We need to fundamentally change the concept of power that is still hegemonistic. We need to change social practices that are still discriminatory. We need to change political cultures that are still based on humiliation.

Yesterday, I noted that many need to see to believe, as Saint Thomas said. But in the case of genocide, we need to believe in order to see. We can come here time and time again with our prayers and our tears, we can point to the suffering of the victims, but people may not believe that these things constitute genocide. They may believe that no massacre has occurred. That is why we feel that reality is based on a genuine consciousness. When we truly feel abhorrence towards violence as a means of resolving conflict; when we rebel peacefully against the overwhelming use of power to resolve conflict with weapons or through economic means of humiliation, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide will not only be an excellent legal text, compelling and committing us to act, but also a reality for all humankind.

Among the three dimensions of prevention, the strengthening of norms and the culture of human rights and international humanitarian law, and the fight against impunity, I wish to stress that of prevention. The Secretary-General and Mr. Eliasson, whom I thank for his presence at this meeting, have convened us under a theme that is not a slogan; it is a call to place rights up front. Since it is not a slogan and these are not just words, we must heed this call. To put rights up front is a synonym; it is the antonym of placing disputes over power first. It is to place the human rights of all human beings first.

To prevent is to assume responsibility to protect. To prevent is to listen to indviduals, regional organizations and the people of every nation State who can give voice to their experience and not to papers issued from ivory towers that merely imagine what others may be going through. To prevent is to continue to strengthen international human rights law. To prevent is to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, which we drafted with France. To prevent is to recognize the right to truth as a right. To prevent is to strengthen, not to destroy, the International Criminal Court so that it is fairer, more consistent and more effective.

I should like to conclude by emphasizing prevention in societies that have experienced genocide. What can we do in its aftermath? How do we imagine the future? How can we believe in the future? How does a society — not individuals, but society as a whole — emerge from this once it has fallen victim? Does it survive by exacting further punishment or by enforcing more human rights? Through more repression or more freedom? Through more discrimination or more equality?

If the prevention of the recurrence of genocide in all societies that have lived through it is based on a political and social scenario in which the culture of fear persists and is perpetuated by the mass media, and in which we are overwhelmed by a culture of suspicion against the dark-skinned, the young, the poor or the immigrant, it may be that punitive tendencies will flourish and massacres recur. Let us look at the populations of the prisons in all our countries and how they got there. To the extent that repression is a response to what we perceive as a potential threat, we may be justifying new genocides.

Chesterton says in one passage that policemen should be philosophers. It is not just a matter of looking for criminals in their hideouts, he says; it is not a matter simply of arresting thieves so as to live in peace. One must go into the elegant halls to detect the pessimists. Who are the pessimists? Those who entertain the frightful thoughts that lead to fanaticism, intolerance and the conviction that hell is others. There is no useful moral relativity when we speak about human rights. It is only on the basis of human rights that we can tal about cultural relativism. There can be no impunity when we speak of violations of human rights, because they are not a matter of opinion. We have talked about this often.

Allow me a gesture in commemoration of the genocide in Rwanda and in thanks to the Ambassador of Rwanda. I have brought for the Ambassador and for the people of Rwanda, on behalf of human rights organizations and of my country and Government, a symbol of our fight against the pessimists, because therein lies our hope. I have here a handkerchief of the mothers and grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo. But it is not really a handkerchief; it was the diaper of the babies who had been kidnapped or who were born in the concentration camps.

We were never victims; we were never pessimistic. We will always work so that power does not humiliate us and so that the world may be ours.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Rwanda for having organized this moment of gathering and commemoration in honour of the victims of genocide. The briefings of Mr. Eliasson and Mr. Keating will enabled us to draw a lesson from the past in order to improve our actions in the future.

On this day of mourning, France pays tribute to all the victims of the genocide. More than a million innocent people were massacred because they were Tutsi or because they were opposed to the murderous folly of a political ideology and system. Mass atrocities were carried out by militias, armed forces and civilians in violation of the very principle of humanity. The violence was planned; radios disseminated hate speech that will forever echo in our consciences.

I also pay homage to the 15 Blue Helmets of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) who were killed in the line of duty. The international community was not able to prevent or stop the genocide. The Council acted too late and did not do enough. And yet, the earliest warning signs had already been given, the first of which in a communiqué from General Dallaire of 11 January 1994.

Fourteen years ago, we met in the Security Council to draw lessons from our collective failure. At that time, we asked the Secretary-General to draft an action plan to prevent genocide. Since then, our preventive mechanisms have been strengthened. Like my Argentine colleague, I shall return to this topic, which she addressed with deep emotion and thoughtfulness.

To prevent is first and foremost to warn. One early aspect of progress to that end was the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, led by Mr. Adama Dieng. Mandated by resolution 1366 (2001), his Office is acting as an early rapid-warning mechanism for the Secretary-General and the Security Council by bringing to their attention any situation that threatens to deteriorate into genocide. The briefings of Mr. Dieng in the Security Council on the Central African Republic have contributed to raising the awareness of the international community so that it can act urgently to prevent such crimes. We must continue to include him further in our work.

To prevent is also to act. A second note of progress was the adoption in 2005 by the Heads of State and of Government of the concept of responsibility to protect. When a Government cannot or will not assume responsibility to protect, the international community must assume that responsibility, including by taking resolute and timely action. France is currently engaged in Mali and the Central African Republic, at the request of the authorities and under Council mandate, to assist the endangered populations. In those countries and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council has given the kind of robust protection of civilians mandate that UNAMIR lacked in 1994. That progress should be consolidated. The Council must continue to play its full role in implementing the responsibility to protect. As a member of the Group of Friends on Responsibility to Protect, France is in favour.

To prevent is to bring to justice. Adopted in1948, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was a precursor to the International Criminal Court; 58 years later, we finally adopted the Rome Statute. In the meantime, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda advanced justice. It was the first to recognize that acts of sexual violence could be acts of genocide. That jurisprudence has been used since then. It remains an essential factor for memory and reparation in reconciliation processes that can avert the cycle of reprisals. The International Criminal Court is permanent and operational. When atrocities are committed, as they are today in Syria, there is no excuse for inaction. The Council can refer the situation to the International Criminal Court.

In spite of such progress, tragic situations, such as that in Syria today, recall the ongoing need to improve our action. In that regard, I welcome the initiatives of the Secretary-General, including his policy of accelerated diligence and of limited contact with those against whom an arrest warrant or a warrant to appear has been issued by the International Criminal Court.

The Organization must serve as a model. All tools must be mobilized — our human rights mechanisms; the network of focal points for the responsibility to protect, in which we participate; our horizon-scanning meetings in the Security Council, which are integral parts of our preventive diplomacy efforts that would benefit from being organized regularly.

Tragic situations arise despite early warning and preventive action. Crimes against humanity or war

crimes are perpetrated before our very eyes, while the Security Council remains paralysed by the abusive use of the veto. That is why France is working for a voluntary code of conduct for the five permanent members to limit the use of the veto when such crimes are committed. We owe that in particular to the Syrian people.

Rafael Lemkin called 70 years ago for international cooperation to free humankind from an odious scourge whose anomic, immoral and inhumane nature shocks the human conscience. In his lofty statement, my Jordanian colleague tried to attribute this scourge to fear. He may well be right, but the absolute horror of the crime attains a metaphysical level in touching upon the evil that is within each of us. Whether or not we are Christian, it is difficult to not think about the original sin in human nature.

Today, France honours the memory of all victims of genocide, and reiterates its commitment to doing everything possible to ensure that the lessons of the mistakes of the past are heeded and that such atrocities do not recur, because such tragedies are still present and possible.

Ms. Murmokaité (Lithuania): Madam President, I would like to thank you first of all for organizing today's briefing on the prevention of and fight against genocide. I also thank Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and Ambassador Colin Keating for their insightful statements.

As we mark the twentieth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, this briefing is an opportune occasion for all of us to reflect on the lessons we have drawn and applied, or that we have failed to apply, since that horrendous tragedy took place. Reeling from the horrors of the Second World War, the international community adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948. Yet ever since, the gap between the intent and implementation has persisted with tragic consequences. Names like Khmer Rouge, Srebrenica and Rwanda, among others, evoke the shocking failures of the international community to stop genocidal carnage.

Twenty years ago in Rwanda, at least 800,000 people were slaughtered in mere weeks. It is our moral duty as human beings to keep the memory of that tragedy alive for generations to come, in order to educate, prevent and protect. We cannot give life back to the victims of those unspeakable horrors. But we can and must honour them by learning from past failures and applying the lessons learned in order to preserve the lives of those who can still be saved.

The most fundamental lesson of the Rwanda genocide is that it could have been prevented, as Ambassador Keating testified to so eloquently earlier this morning. There were plenty of early-warning signs of what was about to come, but they were systematically ignored. The necessary action was not taken, or when taken was too little, too late. And so the carnage went ahead, wiping out as much as 20 per cent of Rwanda's total population, and 70 per cent of the Tutsis. A year later, horrendous atrocities took place again, this time in Srebrenica.

Since then, the international community has come a long way. At the World Summit in 2005, Member States embraced the concept of the responsibility to protect. Early-warning offices were set up within the structure of the United Nations. Special Advisers to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect were appointed. We commend the two Special Advisers for the dedication and resolve they have shown in carrying out their lifesaving functions. Furthermore, mediation and preventive-diplomacy capacities have been strengthened, and regional organization have increased their cooperation with the United Nations to that end. Peacekeeping has continued to evolve, and today the protection of civilians has become an integral part of peacekeeping mandates. The Security Council has expanded its own tools by developing instruments such as horizon-scanning, which, if used systematically, can contribute significantly to early warning and prevention.

The most recent building block of preventive action is the Rights Up Front initiative, aimed at strengthening early response and organizational preparedness incountering human rights violations, which, as we know too well, are a key early-warning sign of conflict and possible atrocities to come. With all those mechanisms and instruments in place, the world today is in a much better position than it was 20 years ago to be able to prevent mass atrocities and genocide. And yet we are all witnesses to the harrowing story of the suffering of Syria's civilian population as the conflict has entered its fourth year. Late last year, the Council had to take urgent action to reinforce protection efforts in South Sudan.

At the same time, a particularly dire humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic was unfolding, reaching new levels of brutality and decimating the country's Muslim population. We welcome the Security Council's decision to establish a United Nations peacekeeping mission there to reinforce the protection efforts undertaken by the African-led Internatinal Support Mission in the Central African Republic and by Operation Sangaris. If only they could — those brutally hacked or starved to death, tortured, mutilated and left to rot by the roadside, made to disappear by force or massively displaced, all because of their ethnicity, religion or creed in these and other conflict zones around the world — they would argue that even today, too little, too late has been done to protect them.

All of this speaks to the fact that further progress is needed in translating into action the concept of the responsibility to protect, the most important and imaginative doctrine to emerge on the international scene for decades, as Louise Arbour put it. With adequate information, mobilization, courage and, first and foremost, political will, genocide can be prevented. We, the international community, must cultivate and build that political will, or even the best of concepts and conventions will fail to protect the world from crimes against humanity and genocide.

The responsibility to protect to which Member States committed themselves in 2005 must be honoured and acted on consistently. National Governments bear the primary responsibility for protecting their populations, including through human rights education and preventive measures, such as countering incitement, extremism and hate speech, intolerance and discrimination, as well as by practising accountability to their citizens themselves. A critical ingredient in the prevention of mass atrocities is the existence of legitimate and accountable national institutions that are inclusive and credible in the eyes of a country's population, as well as an enabling foundation of the rule of law, good governance, and respect for all human rights for all. To that must be added justice and accountability. Accountability must be assured both nationally and internationally, through the supporting decisions of domestic courts and international tribunals. If justice is not done and perpetrators go unpunished, they will continue to kill, maim, rape and commit atrocities.

Through ad hoc international criminal tribunals and especially the International Criminal Court, which merits our full support, the international community delivers a stern warning to all perpetrators that there is no escaping impunity. That in itself is an important deterrent to those who may be considering engaging in acts of violence. In that regard, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda did important work in pursuing justice, and it has set important precedents in the development of international criminal law, such as the first ever prosecution of rape as an act of war. A significant number of the perpetrators of the genocide in Rwanda, including former high-level officials, have been brought to justice. Such a state of affairs should be the rule rather than the exception. Sadly, for many victims of unspeakable crimes around the world, closure through justice is still beyond reach.

Today, through the adoption of resolution 2150 (2104), marking the twentieth anniversary of a genocide, we stand with the people of Rwanda in paying our respects to the victims and expressing solidarity with the survivors The international community has a duty and moral responsibility to make sure that genocide and crimes against humanity have no place in the twenty-first century.

Ms. Sapag Muñoz de la Peña (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Nigeria for organizing this important meeting in the framework of the activities commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, whose victims, among them many children, we remember today with deep respect and solidarity. We appreciate the statement made by Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and through him the commitment of the Secretary-General in this area. We are particularly grateful to Ambassador Keating for the reminder he has given us and for his words on the lessons learned that we should consider today.

My country had the honour to participate in the commemoration held in Kigali on 7 April. At that time we conveyed our solidarity with the people of Rwanda. We would like to once again express our gratitude for our invitation to that commemoration, which our special envoy described as a powerful experience in both human and professional terms.

The gravity of the crime of genocide and its general condemnation meant that a mere four years elapsed between the conception and adoption of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which established that its States parties must undertake to prevent and punish that crime in time of peace or war. The International Court of Justice

has ruled that those obligations extend even to those that are not party to the Convention because they are obligations erga omnes.

Genocide springs up in divided societies, where perceptions and feelings of exclusion that fuel actions against specific groups, creating the conditions for the crime. Such declines in respect for human rights are often a warning sign that demands that national and international authorities display the political will necessary to recognize and report them, as many other speakers have said. In that regard, we emphasize the Secretary-General's Rights Up Front initiative, since it reaffirms the central role of human rights in the United Nations system, as well as the importance of the work of the Offices of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect, which have a vital preventive role to play.

Prevention is possible and should be a central part of our responsibilities as a Council and an international community. There is room here to exercise preventive diplomacy and make efficient use of existing early-warning mechanisms. With that end in view, we recognize the role of regional and subregional organizations, such as the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, as well as of local and religious leaders, women, young people, civil society and the media. We must improve coordination and cooperation with such actors. To that end, international cooperation is necessary. The establishment of national commissions for the prevention of genocide and the efforts made in that regard by the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, mentioned at the Arria formula meeting on intercommunal dialogue and crime prevention of 14 March, are examples to consider.

Greater commitment to strengthening the rule of law and respect for international law, in particular human rights and humanitarian international law, will make it possible to improve levels of inclusion and respect for diversity, development and social justice, thereby dealing with the root causes of such conflicts, as the Permanent Representative of Rwanda pointed out.

Each State has the primary responsibility to protect its population against massive and widespread human rights abuses. The international community must stand by and support Member States when they willfully or owing to a clear inability do not meet that obligation under the concept of the responsibility to protect, enshrined in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1). Chile has convened a series of seminars and meetings at home in the context of its commitment to the concept of the responsibility to protect and its preventive nature. This year, we hope to hold a new outreach seminar at the intersectoral level together with the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.

Another key aspect is the need for international mechanisms and/or tribunals to ensure accountability, thereby preventing impunity and, at the same time, serving as a tool for deterrence and the prevention of future crimes. In that regard, we recall the important role of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. We also underscore the role of the International Criminal Court, established by the Rome Statute, which is one of the most important developments in international criminal justice of the past 50 years, since it is the only permanent independent international criminal court to complement national criminal jurisdictions established in order to deal with, inter alia, the crime of genocide. Given its complementary nature, States must duly cooperate with the Court in order for it to fully discharge its mandate.

In conclusion, Chile wishes to reiterate the appeal we launched at the General Assembly for countries that have the veto power to refrain from using it in cases of crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide or ethnic cleansing, since that detracts from the effectiveness of the Council in upholding the most fundamental values and principles of humanity. We urge the Security Council, in particular its permanent members, to shoulder that responsibility. Let us not forget the failures of recent years and the complex situations facing us today. May we not act too late.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): Human progress is evolutionary. It is built on failure and the strength of a positive response to it. Failure always contains lessons. The United Nations inaction in the face of the events of 1994 in Rwanda remains one of the Organization's darkest failures. Despite credible forewarning and the frustrated efforts of countries such as New Zealand and some other elected members of the Council that tried to persuade the Council to deploy additional United Nations forces to Rwanda, we all failed. Now, 20 years after we said never again, we witness unspeakable crimes being committed in places such as Syria and the Central African Republic. We should need no other reminders that we still have so much more work to do.

The Council's authorization last week of a new peacekeeping mission for the Central African Republic, with the protection of civilians at its core, sent a clear message that the savage abuses and atrocities must end. The Council has acted and done the right thing, as have French and African forces. But the situation could so easily have got away from us and descended into even more chaos. Many of the visible precursors to potential genocide and other atrocities were present. Prevention will always probably be our hardest task. Our diligence must be not only constant but also intrumentalized and quick. We still have lessons to learn.

The Council must now act to respond to the mass atrocities being committed in Syria, including the systematic and widespread torture and deliberate targeting of civilians by the regime as part of its military strategy. The referral of the situation to the International Criminal Court is long overdue. In that context, France's proposal for permanent members to voluntarily renounce their veto powers in cases of mass atrocity crimes is very welcome. It should be supported and we should give it serious consideration.

The unanimous endorsement by Heads of State and Governement of the responsibility to protect (R2P) in 2005 was a resounding ackowledgement that, while States have the primary responsibility to protect their own populations from mass atrocities, we, the international community, and the Council must provide protection where national Governments have manifestly failed. On behalf of the Group Of Friends of R2P, comprising 45 States in total, including 10 members of the Council, we welcome the references to R2P in resolution 2150 (2014), which we have just adopted. While that is an essential normative response to our past failures, the challenge, as always, is implementation. We must do all that we can to operationalize R2P.

As we now understand, the genocide in Rwanda started not with massacres in churches but with hate speech, discrimination and marginalization. That underlines the fact that it is possible to identify and to implement a policy for atrocity prevention so that risk factors are addressed before a situation becomes a crisis that results in mass atrocities. As the Deputy Secretary-General reminded us this morning, just as genocide is systematic and planned, so the work to prevent it must be deliberate and systematic. Prevention requires strengthening the rule of law and respect for human rights, building institutions, ensuring good governance, combating discrimination and ensuring the participation of women and, in particular, young people. Youth unemployment and alienation will be, I believe, the most challenging for us all over the next decades.

Prevention also requires a robust civil society and non-governmental organizations, parliaments and media. National legislation can be instrumental and education decisive. The designation of a national R2P focal point within countries can help to integrate an atrocity prevention perspective in national policies. Focal points can form instrumental networks, especially across combustible regions, for helping to prevent atrocity crimes. Australia, together with Ghana, Costa Rica and Denmark, co-facilitate the R2P focal points initiative. We encourage Member States that have not already done so to appoint a national R2P focal point.

As others have said and as we all know, effective early warning mechanisms are of course essential. The Secretary-General's Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and on R2P have a dedicated function to look for signs of precursors to mass atrocity crimes, sounding the alarm, when necessary, and working with States and regional organizations to enhance their prevention efforts. The Council should receive more frequent briefings from both Special Advisers. We should schedule regular and serious horizon-scanning sessions that are uncensored by the Council's own political dynamics. The Secretary-General's leadership on that is crucial.

The Council should support the vital Rights Up Front initiative, as we now know that human rights violations are often the canary in the mineshaft. We see that in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and will be briefed by the commission of inquiry on human rights in the Arria format tomorrow. We should also support the provision of peacekeeping operations with robust mandates. The protection of civilians must always be at the core of United Nations efforts to secure peace.

The recent use of peacekeeping bases in South Sudan to shelter people fleeing violence shows the type of concrete steps that can make a real difference and save lives on the ground. It also shows what desperate people fleeing atrocity not just need, but rightfully expect from the United Nations. As Dag Hammarskjöld said, the United Nations is not here to take people to heaven, but we are here to save people from hell. Humanitarian access itself is a vital component in how we must approach peacekeeping.

Finally, the Council must continue constantly to support efforts to end impunity, including the efforts made by the ad hoc international criminal courts and tribunals and the International Criminal Court. We are seeing evidence that international criminal justice mechanisms can be a powerful deterrent, but to do that they require strong international support. It should be axiomatic that the Council provides support to the International Criminal Court where the Council has itself referred a situation to the Court.

In concluding, I recall that in his book about the Rwandan genocide, entitled *Shake Hands with the Devil*, United Nations Force Commander General Romeo Dallaire, a hero, chillingly describes the mechanics of genocide — the actual killings every day — as hard work. It takes a lot of effort to murder 1 million people in 100 days. Equally, today it takes a lot of effort from us, hard work in the Council, to prevent genocide and mass atrocities. Renewed common resolve, through occasions like this debate, is necessary, but is too easy to give and it is never enough.

As Ambassador Colin Keating concluded in his remarks this morning — and Colin's words deserve repeating — if we truly want prevention to work, then we need better political, operational and financial mechanisms for the Council and the wider United Nations system, new mechanisms for improved early warning, better systems for briefing and presenting options to the Council at the early stages of potential crises, enhanced preventive diplomacy, more effective use of Chapter VI tools, quick preventive deployment and, if all else fails, robust deterrence.

That is simply a linear challenge to all of us in the Council and there is no rocket science in understanding that challenge. We have the conceptual frameworks and the toolkits and we see what is happening every day across the world. That is why we are sitting here. What we need to do is work harder, much harder, to match our response and the leadership mandated of us by all the peoples of the world to meet a simple linear challenge.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I thank you, Madam President, for convening this important meeting to mark the twentieth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda. I would like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General for his presence and his thoughtful intervention today. And I thank Colin Keating for his powerful and telling testimony, speaking from a position of real authority, as the President of the Security Council in April 1994. We must heed his important recommendations.

It has been 20 years since the international community said "never again". This debate is an opportunity to assess the progress made against that pledge and to consider what more should be done. Terrible events took place in Rwanda in 1994. Today we remember the victims, the survivors and those who risk their lives to stop the horror. We remember both the personal tragedies and the horrendous scale of the killing. We commend the Rwandan people on the outstanding progress they have made in transforming their country from an impoverished war-torn State into a stable, confident country. The United Kingdom has been and will continue to be a long-standing friend, but it is not enough to simply remember. The events in Rwanda in 1994 and other genocides and mass atrocities, like Srebrenica in 1995, underline the vital shared interest in devising and re-evaluating measures to protect populations at risk.

The primary responsibility for protecting citizens rests, of course, with the States themselves. But 1994 showed us that where a State is failing to act to protect its own population or, even worse, is active in persecuting and killing its own citizens, the international community has an equal and shared responsibility to do all it can to protect populations at risk. States must act in full conformity with the United Nations Charter and work with and through the United Nations to confront threats. We urge countries that have not already done so to sign and ratify treaties such as the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Those treaties work because they provide effective penalties for persons guilty of genocide.

To deter atrocities and achieve justice for victims, perpetrators of genocide must be held accountable for their actions. Since the genocide in Rwanda, global work to fight impunity has been considerably strengthened through the investigation and prosecution of crimes in the international criminal justice system. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has made a substantial contribution. And in the International Criminal Court (ICC) we now have a permanent court with jurisdiction over genocide war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is vital that States cooperate with the ICC so that it can deliver accountability where national authorities are unable or unwilling to act.

There must be no safe harbour for those who commit atrocities, no matter what office they hold. It is a matter of great regret that some ICC States parties have failed to comply with their obligation to implement an arrest warrant for an indictment which covers three counts of genocide. It is high time for States to live up to those obligations and for the Council to follow up on its referral of the situation in Darfur.

The Rwandan genocide is one of several instances in which the Security Council has failed to act, but since 1994 the United Nations has brought about real improvements in our collective ability to take action in situations that could result in mass atrocities. We have responded to the horrors of the past with a number of important decisions. In 2006, the Security Council adopted resolution 1674 (2006) on protecting civilians and reaffirmed its commitment in resolution 1894 (2009) in 2009.

The protection of civilians is now a cornerstone of modern peacekeeping and is incorporated into most peacekeeping mandates. The United Nations has developed better early warning mechanisms to equip the international community with the means to preempt mass atrocities. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, the Human Rights Council and the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide all make important contributions.

But as Ambassador Keating spelled out, early warning by itself is not enough. We must get better at translating early warning into effective preventive action and that requires political will. Political will is a responsibility of every single member of the Security Council and especially every permanent member of the Security Council. The responsibility to protect initiative of 2005 is another positive development and is increasingly incorporated into national Governments' deliberations. We must support States that are building their capacity on the preventative aspects of the responsibility to protect and help them to respond to tensions before they escalate.

When the international community is united, we can achieve progress that would otherwise be impossible. A united Security Council effectively prevented mass atrocities in Côte d'Ivoire and in Libya and has made positive progress in Mali and Somalia. Today widespread insecurity in the Central African Republic is creating intensifying ethnic and religious divides, but the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union are working together to bring hope to that appalling situation. But immense challenges remain. South Sudan, the world's newest nation, faces descent into civil war if peace talks falter. In Syria, the regime still denies the life-saving access the population desperately needs and continues to persecute and kill its own citizens indiscriminately.

With 20 years having passed since the terrible atrocities in Rwanda, there are no more excuses. We now have the tools not just to say "Never again", but to stay true to our word and to act together to prevent future genocides.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I, too, thank Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and Ambassador Colin Keating for their statements.

Twenty years ago, despite numerous warnings, the States Members of the United Nations, and in particular of the Security Council, were not been able to take decisive measures that would have put an end to the spread of ethnic hatred or to prevent genocide. As my Minister of Foreign and European Affairs did in Kigali on 7 April, I wish to pay tribute to the hundreds of thousands of victims of genocide. I also pay tribute to the strength and determination of Rwandans who were able to rebuild their lives and their country after their terrible ordeal. Our meeting today will not restore life to the more than 800,000 massacred Rwandans or lessen the pain of the survivors, but it is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to applying the lessons of the past in order to prevent such atrocities from happening in the future.

The genocide in Rwanda unleashed a shock wave that rocked the entire United Nations. It raised fundamental questions about the authority and responsibility of the Security Council, the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping, the scope of international justice, the roots of violence and the responsibility of the international community to protect endangered populations from genocide. I shall focus on two points: the responsibility to protect and the fight against impunity.

The 1994 genocide highlighted the need for the United Nations to strengthen its capacity to respond to serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, and to give greater attention to the prevention of mass atrocities. It was a catalyst to the development of the principle of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic

cleansing and crimes against humanity. This principle, which Luxembourg fully supports, was endorsed by the 2005 World Summit. Since then, the Security Council has invoked the responsibility to protect several times, most recently in South Sudan, Yemen, Mali and the Central African Republic. The Council must continue on this path and embody the principle of the responsibility to protect in all its dimensions.

Luxembourg also reaffirms its full support for the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for the Prevention of Genocide and its early warning role. On our initiative, the Special Adviser was able to speak for the first time before the Security Council at its open meeting on 22 January (see S/PV.7098) to sound the alarm about the Central African Republic. Indeed, we must pay special attention to forewarnings of atrocities, in a logic of prevention. Sustained efforts are needed to end incitement to hatred and intolerance. The implementation of the Rights Up Front initiative, launched by the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General in December 2013, will also contribute to strengthening the capacity of the United Nations and the Council to respond in a timely manner.

Over the past 20 years, the Security Council has come to recognize that the fight against impunity is essential to preventing further genocide and to bringing justice to victims. Created on 8 November 1994 at the request of Rwanda, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has played a crucial rôle. While the ICTR is about to conclude its work and its transition to the Residual Mechanism is in progress, we welcome the significant progress made by the ICTR in developing international law to bring justice to victims, apprehend fugitives and prosecute persons responsible for genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

The ICTR has been a source of inspiration to national and international courts, and in particular in the creation of the International Criminal Court. Mass atrocities committed in recent decades have shown that it was imperative to create a permanent court with universal vocation to end impunity for the most serious crimes. It is more important than ever that the Council fulfils its responsibilities to end impunity, including by providing unfailing support to the International Criminal Court.

This commemoration of the Rwandan genocide, a moment of reflection and pain, is also a moment of inspiration to action. We must act to prevent genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Whether for Syria, South Sudan or the Central African Republic, we must do our all to ensure that the Security Council lives up to its responsibilities. Our goal must be to translate the moral imperative of "never again" into action. The unanimous adoption this morning of resolution 2150 (2014), drafted by Rwanda, impels us to do so. Let us comply in honour of the victims of the past and to protect future generations from the scourge of genocide.

Mr. Cherif (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Madam President, for having convened this meeting of the Council on threats to international peace and security and the fight against genocide. I also thank Mr. Jan Eliasson and Ambassador Colin Keating for their statements.

The world is commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda, which cost more than 800,000 human lives. It was a massacre that shocked the conscience of the entire world in its brutality and scope. Chad remembers all of those who lost their lives and expresses its support to the survivors and relatives of the victims who continue to seek the truth. Chad welcomes the efforts of the Rwandan Government and its reconciliation and peacebuilding policy, which has enabled the country to restore stability and pursue its economic recovery.

The world is increasingly threatened by conflicts within States arising from multiple and varied causes. Given its inability to end conflicts, the international community must use all the tools necessary to anticipate conflict and thereby prevent its tragic and incalculable consequences, including genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and other types of atrocity.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) places the prevention of mass crimes — genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity — at the core of the responsibility of States to protect civilians. The lessons learned from the genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda call upon the entire international community to reconsider its means of action and capacity to act when faced with such mass atrocities. In that context, the international community should not only continue to assess the effectiveness of its measures, but also and above all to provide itself with an early-warning mechanism to detect situations that are likely to lead to crimes on a mass scale.

While the genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda escaped the vigilance of the international community at the

time, my country notes with great concern that, unfortunately, the latter remains powerless in the face of mass crimes perpetrated in some parts of the world.

Although the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic Operation Sangaris has saved thousands of lives and set in motion a stabilization process in Central African Republic, the international community remains paralysed when it is faced with other situations of grave violence perpetrated against civilian populations. Confronted with large-scale atrocities, States — and the United Nations — must above all meet their responsibilities to end them before it is too late.

Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in a statement he made at the Human Rights Council in Geneva, said,

> "We have little hope of preventing genocide, or reassuring those who live in fear of its recurrence, if people who have committed this most heinous of crimes are left at large, and not held to account. It is therefore vital that we build and maintain robust judicial systems, both national and international, so that, over time, people will see there is no impunity for such crimes."

We therefore cannot speak about reconciliation or lasting peace in Rwanda without raising the question of justice for the victims and their families and the impunity that certain perpetrators of genocide and their accomplices enjoy. Indeed, only an independent and impartial justice system can make a significant contribution to healing wounds and mending broken hearts. In that regard, we welcome the work done by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in arresting and prosecuting perpetrators of genocide and their accomplices. That initiative sounded the end of impunity and sent a strong signal to all those who might be tempted to commit mass crimes. The ICTR has shown that strengthening international criminal justice could go beyond playing a deterrent role to efficiently contributing to prevention.

The United Nations, whose principal role is the maintenance of international peace and security, must strengthen its cooperation with the regional and subregional organizations to be even more effective before, during and after conflict throughout the world. In that regard, we welcome the current partnership between the African Union and the United Nations and call for it to be strengthened. Concerted action between the United Nations and the African Union has allowed, despite the lack of resources and some difficulties in coordination, to contain and/or push away serious threats to peace at various levels in certain African countries, including Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic, to cite but a few.

In conclusion, we believe that the Security Council should react with urgency in the event of mass crimes based on its responsibility to protect. The resolution that we have just adopted (resolution 2150 (2014)) translates, we hope, our shared determination and will to continue to fight against the crimes of genocide and serious violations of human rights.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

I want to join those who have taken the floor before me to thank our briefers, Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and Ambassador Colin Keating, for their briefings. They have not only provided profound insights and fresh perspectives on today's subject of discussion, but they have also established some institutional memory for the future. I want to sincerely thank Ambassador Keating in particular for his recognition of Nigeria's critical role in condemning the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and reinforcing the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda in the Security Council in 1994. I thank him very much; we feel inspired by that recognition.

The concept note for today's briefing (S/2014/265, annex) invites us to consider various issues related to the prevention of genocide. I shall attempt to address the evolution of the preventive capabilities of the United Nations since the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, early warning mechanisms, fighting impunity through justice, and lessons learned.

On the evolution of the preventive capabilities of the United Nations since 1994, Nigeria would like to acknowledge the important steps that the United Nations has taken, and I want to name them specifically. During the tenth anniversary of the genocide in 2004, then-Secretary-General Kofi Annan presented a five-point plan of action aimed at preventing genocide. The elements of the plan were designed to, first, prevent armed conflict which may provide a provide a pretext for genocide; secondly, protect civilians in armed conflict, including through the use of United Nations peacekeepers; thirdly, end impunity through judicial

action in national and international courts; fourthly, gather information and set up early warning systems; and fifthly, take swift and decisive action, including through the use of military force.

One year later, at the 2005 World Summit, leaders from across the world agreed on the responsibility to protect populations against the four mass atrocities — genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. We appreciate the Secretary-General's past reports on the subject in which he has proposed tools for genocide prevention, including the report of January 2009 on "Implementing the responsibility to protect" (A/63/677), the July 2010 report on "Early warning, assessment and the responsibility to protect" (A/64/864), and the July 2013 report on "Responsibility to protect: State responsibility and prevention" (S/2013/399).

In July 2009, the Secretary-General presented his January 2009 report to the General Assembly, and in the same month a General Assembly plenary debate on the responsibility to protect was held (A/63/PV.97). The debate presented delegations with an opportunity to demonstrate their support for implementing their commitments under the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (resolution 60/1). Similarly, following the release of the July 2010 report, the General Assembly, on 9 August 2010, convened an informal interactive dialogue on the main themes of the report. Nigeria was one of the eight countries that participated in that dialogue.

In addition to the periodic reports, the Secretary-General has made some significant appointments since the genocide in Rwanda that will help in the fight against genocide, which has been mentioned by various speakers this morning. We therefore commend the Secretary-General for appointing the Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide and a Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect. We also commend the Secretary-General for his Rights Up Front initiative, which contains six critical actions to help the Secretariat coordinate the Organization's work in the area of human rights. One of the actions requires the United Nations to provide Member States with candid information concerning people at risk of various violations of human rights.

Nigeria would like to underline the importance of adherence to the principle of early warning mechanisms and the need for a timely and decisive response. Today, there is a plethora of theatres of conflict around the world, and urgent actions are required to halt those conflicts and indeed address their root causes. In some of those places, the situation is reaching a critical threshold and the risk of mass atrocity crimes is very high. The benefits of an early warning mechanism is that it enhances the chances of detecting those signs that point to the possibility that genocide may indeed occur. With that comes the added benefit of allowing for preventive measures to be taken in a timely manner.

Nigeria remains committed to the fight against impunity. We believe that impunity must be addressed resolutely wherever it occurs anywhere in world. The fight against impunity and the prevention of mass atrocity crimes are national priorities for us, as clearly demonstrated through the various instruments instituted to address that menace. Our belief in the need for global action against mass atrocity crimes and security threats to humankind underpins our ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Arms Trade Treaty and other relevant international legal instruments.

Nigeria appreciates the important role of the ICC in fighting genocide and other mass atrocity crimes. Perpetrators of genocide must be held accountable in order to send a strong and unambiguous message of zero tolerance on the part of the international community. We recall that at the 27 January New York launch of Kwibuka20, the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, the Secretary-General aptly stated that we have learned important lessons. He also emphasized that genocide is not a single event but a process that requires planning and resources to carry out, and that with adequate information, mobilization, courage and political will, genocide can indeed be prevented.

Several questions arise from that thesis of the Secretary-General. How can we obtain information to prevent genocide? Who needs to be mobilized and by whom in order to prevent genocide? And how do we generate the courage and political will to prevent genocide? Those are key questions to which we are all collectively responsible to provide adequate and genuine responses.

Ultimately, it all boils down to the choices that we all decide to make. The choice of compassion over hatred, the choice of inclusion over exclusion, and the choice of peace over war are always ours to make.

Today is an important reminder of the far-reaching consequences of those choices. Let the memories of Rwanda be a constant and visible reminder of the necessity of making the right choice — the choice of peace. Let us muster the courage that makes us too strong for fear and too noble for anger or revenge. Let us eschew neutrality.

In 2010, while we served on the Security Council, I had occasion at a retreat of the Council to remind the Council that, according to the great poet Dante, neutrality is not an option because, again according to Dante, the hottest corner of hell is reserved for those who preserve their neutrality in times of moral crisis.

We want to take this opportunity to recognize the remarkable progress that Rwanda has made over the past 20 years in healing the wounds of genocide and advancing the process of reconciliation. We are greatly inspired by that, and we join the international community in the adoption of resolution 2150 (2014) today in the determined chorus of "never again".

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

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Security Council

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Official communiqué of the 7156th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 16 April 2014, at 3 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 16 April 2014, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 7156th meeting in private with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara.

"The President invited Mr. Wolfgang Weisbrod-Weber, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, to participate in the meeting in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The Security Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries heard a briefing by Mr. Weisbrod-Weber."

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